CONFIDENTIAL.

DELHI RECORDS.

2

File No. 280 of 1923.
Part .
Serial Nos. 1—34 &K.W.

1923.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

HOME DEPARTMENT.

POLITICAL.

SUBJECT.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces. Agitation in connection with the so-called Swaraj or National Flag at Nagpur.

Activities of local bodies under influences explicitly antagonistic to Government and action taken to check them.

PREVIOUS REFERENCES.

Poll. File No. 198 of 1923, Serial Nos. 1-15 (printed).
Poll. File No. 56 of 1923, Serial Nos. 1-10 (printed).
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LATER REFERENCES.

pm 7 150 of 1925-
F. 14/X/31-Poll.

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File No. 280 of 1923.
Part .
Serial Nos. 1—34 & K.W.

File No. 280 of 1923.
Part .
Serial Nos. 1—34 & K. W.

NOTES.

POLITICAL.

No.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCES. AGITATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE SO-CALLED SWARAJ OR NATIONAL FLAG AT NAGPUR.

ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL BODIES UNDER INFLUENCES EXPLICITLY ANTAGONISTIC TO GOVERNMENT AND ACTION TAKEN TO CHECK THEM.

Please see paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Central Provinces report for the second half of May 1923 and the Indian News Agency telegram of the 5th. There seems some risk of the Central Provinces Government incurring, though no doubt on a much smaller scale, some of the inconveniences which were attached to the arrest and conviction in Bengal and elsewhere of large numbers of persons in connection with the volunteer movement of 1921-22. The efficacy of the present procedure at Nagpur appears to depend on the hypothesis that there is only a limited number of volunteers available locally for these demonstrations and that the supply is rapidly drying up. On the other hand, there is at least a possibility of the movement for importing volunteers from other provinces meeting with some degree of success, in which case the present policy of the Central Provinces Government may require reconsideration. It seems desirable at any rate that occasion should now be taken to obtain from the Central Provinces Government a revised appreciation of the situation with special reference to the policy indicated in the Government of India's despatch to the Secretary of State on the general question of the Swaraj flag. As I understand Hon'ble Member has been in communication with His Excellency Sir Frank Sly on the subject, I would venture to suggest that perhaps the best course would be for the Hon'ble Member to send a copy of the despatch for Sir Frank Sly's information under cover of a personal letter with some such suggestions as are indicated in this note.

2. A closely analogous situation in the liquor shop picketting campaign at Poona in 1922 was successfully dealt with by the Bombay Government by a different method. In order to avoid the arrest and imprisonment of an indefinite number of prisoners of a particularly troublesome type and to deprive the demonstrators of a cheap "crown of martyrdom", the prosecution was instructed to press for substantial fines without any sentence of imprisonment, whether substantive or in default of the payment of fine.* Recovery of the fines by distraint was then systematically proceeded with and in a very short time the movement collapsed. I venture to think this method might be successfully employed at Nagpur in the case both of local and of imported volunteers. The suggestion might perhaps be made. For offences under the first part of Section 188, Indian Penal Code, a fine up to Rs. 200 may be inflicted and for offences under the second part up to Rs. 1,000.

3. I mentioned the matter yesterday to His Excellency, who would, subject to Hon'ble Member's concurrence, approve. The draft to Secretary of State may issue.

J. Crerar,—7-6-23.

I have issued the demi-official below; the telegram to Secretary of State may issue.

W. M. H[ailey],—8-6-23.

Demi-official to His Excellency Sir Frank Sly, K.C.S.I., Governor of the Central Provinces, No. D.-1352, dated Simla, the 9th June 1923.

As I promised in answering your letter the other day, I now send you a copy (for your own information) of our despatch of the 31st of May on the subject of the use of the Swaraj Flag.

2. I notice from your latest reports that your local volunteers have been reinforced from outside, up to the end of May 262 had been convicted and there was a very heavy crop at

*This is optional of the Court, *vide* 64 I. P. C.

the beginning of this month. It would be very interesting for us to know your own appreciation of the chance of this movement continuing, with the possibility that you may find your jails crowded by volunteers from outside or with paid martyrs from among your aboriginal population.

3. I do not know if you have considered the advisability of applying the remedy used by Bombay to meet the liquor shop picketting campaign at Poona in 1922. There the prosecution was instructed to press for substantial fines without any sentence of imprisonment, either substantive or in default of payment of fine ; recovery of the fines by distraint was then systematically proceeded with and in a very short time the movement collapsed. You might possibly find that the ' fine ' procedure, which does not offer quite so easy a crown of martyrdom, would rob the Satyagraha movement in Nagpur of some of its attractions. I send you the suggestion for what it is worth, for of course local considerations must always remain the decisive factor in a matter of this kind.

Serial No. 1.—Telegram from the Government of the Central Provinces, no. C.-879-II, dated the 9th June 1923.

It appears that the Government of the Central Provinces have encountered the difficulty, the possibility of which was suggested in noting on their last fortnightly report, if proceeding on the affirmation of a limited local supply of recruits. I do not quite understand the difficulty about the extension of orders under Section 144, Civil Procedure Code. The orders of a District Magistrate under that section have currency for two months and may be extended by notification of the Indian Government. Apart from this, the undesirability of giving wider extension to the controversy on this particular issue is obvious. I venture to invite attention to the suggestion already made as regards resort to the expedient of substantial fines, without any sentence of imprisonment, whether substantive or in default, accompanied by a rigorous and systematic prosecution of execution by distraint.

J. Crerar,—9-6-23.

Issue telegrams below.

W. M. H[ailey],—10-6-23.

Serial No. 2.—Telegram to the Government of the Central Provinces, no. D.-1387, dated the 10th June 1923.

Serial No. 3.—Telegram to the Government of Bombay, no. D.-1387, dated the 10th June 1923.

I have discussed with His Excellency.

W. M. H[ailey],—11-6-23.

Serial No. 4.—Telegram to Secretary of State, No. 460, dated 10th June 1923.

Serial No. 5.—Telegram from Bombay, no. S. D.-983, dated 12th June 1923.

Submitted.

2. It would appear that the Central Provinces Government have departed considerably from the policy indicated in their letter of 16th April 1923. Their present tactics appear to be to arrest small parties (not exceeding four) carrying the flag ; and they propose to vary these by prosecuting Congress leaders under Section 120-B, Indian Penal Code, presumably for enlisting or instigating volunteers.

3. I agree with the opinion expressed by the Bombay Government. It is clearly undesirable to confer on these at present precrile demonstrations the dignity of a " criminal conspiracy " the expedient already conveyed to Sir F. Sly in Hon'ble Member's demi-official letter of 9th, may be recommended and I should be inclined further to deprecate action against small groups which cannot be treated as unlawful assemblies.

J. Crerar,—12-6-23.

The attached telegram, the purport of which was discussed with His Excellency by Hon'ble Member yesterday, may issue.

J. Crerar,—16-6-23.

W. M. H[ailey],—16-6-23.

Issue at once.

J. Crerar,—16-6-23.

Serial No. 6.—Telegram to the Central Provinces Government, no. 1387-D., dated 16th June 1923.

Serial No. 7.—Telegram from the Government of the Central Provinces, no. C.-982-2, dated the 19th June 1923.

For information.

G. H. W. Davies,—20-6-23.

The letter may be awaited.

J. Crerar,—20-6-23.

Yes, when we get it we may send a communication to Secretary of State. It will be a useful corollary to our despatch.

W. M. H[ailey],—20-6-23.

Serial No. 8.—Letter from the Government of the United Provinces, no. C.-982-II, dated 18th June 1923.

Submitted with a draft telegram to Secretary of State. His Excellency should see.

J. McD.,—22-6-23.

The letter may also be forwarded to the Secretary of State, but possibly Government may wish to add some comments.

G. H. W. Davies,—23-6-23.

After issue of telegram the case should be re-submitted for further action.

J. Crerar,—26-6-23.

Serial No. 9.—Telegram from His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces, dated 26th June 1923.

I have telegraphed clear the line to Sir F. Sly to start for Simla forthwith as he proposes.

G. F. deMontmorency,—27-6-23.

We may also wire officially in reply; it is understood that His Excellency the Viceroy has already intimated his desire to discuss question with His Excellency the Governor and the Home Member at an early date and Government of India would prefer to await their arrival before replying to telegram of 26th.

W. M. H[ailey],—27-6-23.

The telegram to the Secretary of State has been approved by Hon'ble Member with the substitution of the attached alternative draft of a passage. It should now issue.

J. Crerar,—28-6-23.

Serial No. 10.—Telegram to His Majesty's Secretary of State, no. 528, dated 29th June 1923.

Telegram from Sir M. Hailey, to His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces, dated 28th June 1923.

Your telegram 26th. In view of your early arrival Simla we do not propose to send official reply to your telegram 26th pending discussion.

From the Hon'ble Sir W. M. Hailey, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. Home Member, to Sir G. F. deMontmorency dated the 2nd July 1923.

I have noted briefly the results of my conversation with Sir F. Sly and our subsequent interview with His Excellency.

If His Excellency agrees that it is correct—it is of course only a memorandum—I should like to place it on record on our case.

His Excellency has approved.

G. F. deMontmorency,—3-7-23.

I discussed to-day with Sir Frank Sly and Sir M. Joshi the recent communication from the Central Provinces on the Nagpur demonstrations.

2. Sir M. Joshi said that this letter was partly due to an anticipation that Inians in Nagpur would shortly memorialize the Governor, protesting that the exhibition of the flag was no annoyance to them and asking for a settlement of the question; it would then have the aspect of a purely racial dispute. He thought (and Sir Frank Sly agreed) that the two Committees meeting at Nagpur on the 5th and 8th would probably decide to support the agitation; in which case its scope would be greatly extended and the Central Provinces jails would be filled with volunteers. Moreover, the prohibitory order must expire on the 17th August. On the other hand they were by no means convinced that even if negotiations were opened, they would be successful; they further admitted that if a compromise on the lines proposed were effected, it would be difficult if not impossible to prevent the flying of the flag on Municipal Buildings.

3. Sir Frank Sly, Sir M. Joshi and I saw His Excellency the Viceroy in the evening—His Excellency expressed the view that at this stage we could really consider only one fact; that the campaign was actually being waged as a deliberate attempt to prove that the organization conducting it could make Government yield the position it had taken up. Admitting that the ground taken by us (*i.e.*, existence of annoyance) was not a very strong one, nevertheless we were within the law; we were not taking the initiative in action calculated to offend religious susceptibilities or what could in any sense be described as national sentiment. The mere fact that volunteers were being brought from outside showed that what we were fighting was an organization not a genuine feeling on the part of people affected by our order; for as far as we know, the very people coming to Naagpur could exhibit the flag in their own area without hindrance. The agitation was clearly artificial, and directed purely to one end—to gain popularity for the extreme congress organization and win a victory over Government.

4. He was therefore opposed to any negotiations; particularly in view of the fact that an agreement on the lines proposed would render impossible the position not only of the Central Provinces but other local Governments in regard to the flying of the flag on Municipal and other buildings—and it would be impossible to contemplate giving way on this question.

5. He assured Sir Frank Sly of all support in this matter, and it was agreed that we should address other local Governments pointing out the difficulties exprerienced by the Central Provinces and explaining our attitude, asking them to give accommodation if necessary to prisoners for which the local Government had no room, and if possible to arrest on the way (under the preventive sections) any volunteers who were proceeding to Nagpur with the expressed intention of breaking the rules forbidding processions.

M. W. H[ailey],—1-7-23.

R[eading],—3-7-23.

Demi-official from F. G. Sly, K.C.S.I., to the Hon'ble Sir W. M. Hailey, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Home Department.

I have received the following telegram "Kelkar visited Jaman Lal (Bajaj) in jail today and recorded conversation. Jaman Lal said that the movement was no challenge to Union Jack nor to cause annoyance to Europeans and others, and all he wanted was right through civil station in peaceful manner. Jaman Lal finally said this was his personal view and that he was ignorant of view of all-India congress."

The line I propose to take is that the Government will not make the first advance, but if a public statement to the above effect is made by the leaders, then Government would withdraw the order if satisfied that the statement is genuine.

Please let me know if you have any advice to give. This point was not clearly settled yesterday. I anticipate that Kelkar may resign.

I submit a draft reply to His Excellency Sir F. Sly for consideration.

J. Crerar,—2-7-23.

W. M. H[ailey],—2-7-23.

His Excellency has approved of the draft.

J. Crerar,—3-7-23.

Issue attached telegram.

J. Crerar,—4-7-23.

Serial No. 11.—Telegram to Central Provinces Government no. D.-1387-Poll., dated the 4th July 1923.

Telegram from the Non'ble Sir Malcolm Hailey, Home Department, to His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces, No. 542-Pol., dated the 3rd July 1923.

Clear the line.—Demi-official. Received your demi-official letter of 2nd July in which you indicate, on receipt of certain assurances from leaders, possibility of withdrawal of order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code. We do not attach primary importance to disavowal of challenge to Union Jack which, at the most, if made in suitable terms, might be of value mainly for publicity purposes. In our opinion assurances which would alone justify course proposed must bear directly on specific grounds for Government's action hitherto, *viz.* vindication of law and maintenance of order. There should therefore be specific undertaking that no procession will be taken out without license of authorities and that promoters will comply in all A. respect with regulations laid down for prevention of any infringement of law or any breach of peace or any injury or annoyance to public. It is possible that undertaking in these terms will not be given, but if refused unlawful intention and disorderly character of movement will be clearly exposed.

Demi-official from the Hon'ble Sir Malcolm Hailey, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Home Department, to the Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated Simla, the 4th July 1923.

Will you kindly see the marked passage ? I think we should wire clear-the-line to Central Provinces Government that the Government of India assume they may deny as untrue the report in the I. N. A. that the Central Provinces Government had proposed round table conference, offering to release prisoners and permit processions if Union Jack were carried along with National Flag.

Bombay and Gujarat papers publish statement by Gopaldas small chief of Kathiawar who was recently deprived of his ruling powers that Central Provinces Government proposed round table conference offering to release prisoners and permit processions if Union Jack was carried along with National Flag. Proposal he states was rejected by Jamanlal Bajaj who wanted all prisoners to be released before any negotiations.

I have mentioned this today to His Excellency.

J. Crerar,—4-7-23.

Serial No. 12.—Telegram from the Government of the Central Provinces dated the 4th July 1923.

A dementi of the statement made in the I. A. N. telegram of July 3rd has issued.

2. With reference to Sections 5 of of the memorandum at pre page I venture to suggest that when the results of the Congress and Khilafat Committee meetings now being held at Nagpur are known— and also the outcome of any appearances that may be offered by the local leaders, the case for addressing local Governments will be considerably clearer, and this action might therefore be postponed for a few days.

J. Crerar,—5-7-23.

I agree.

W. M. H[ailey],—6-7-23.

Demi-official from Sir F. G. Sly, K.C.S.I., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of Nagpur to Sir Malcolm Hailey, K.C.S.I., I.C.S., Member-in-charge, Government of India, Home Department, dated the 4th July 1923.

You will be interested to hear that a full Cabinet meeting of the Government decided unanimously to continue the present policy against the National Flag Satyagraha.

Kelkar's interview with Jaman Lal Bajaj in jail was abortive, because the latter refused to allow anything about it to be published.

I am told that Kelkar is influenced by the fact that the local Swaraj party is against the Satyagraha, and so long as this continues and Kelkar can rely that they will not oppose him at the next election, he will support the Government.

Demi-official from Sir Malcolm Hailey, K.C.S.I., I.C.S., Member-in-Charge Government of India, Home Department, to Sir G. F. de Montmorency, K.C.S.I., Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy, dated the 9th July 1923.

His Excellency would, I think like to see the enclosed. Would you kindly let me have it back as I have not answered Sly.

I return Sir F. Sly's letter which His Excellency has seen.

G. F. deMontmorency.

I have answered Sir F. Sly.

W. M. H[ailey],—9-7-23.

Seen.

J. Crerar,—9-7-23.

Serial No. 13.—Question and Answer in Parliament no. 3, dated the 11th June 1923.

For information. A copy many be forwarded to the Central Provinces Government. Endorsement put up.

J. McD.,—3-7-23.

G. H. W. Davies,—4-7-23.

Serial no. 14.—Endorsement to Central Provinces Government, no. D.-1685, dated the 6th July 1923.

Serial no. 15.—Telegram to the Government of the Central Provinces, no. D.-3087, dated the 18th Ju ly1923.

Serial no. 16.—Telegram from the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, no. C-31 dated the 19th July 1923.

For information.

J. McD.,—20-7-23.

G. H. W. Davies,—20-7-23.

Civil disobedience.

Thursday, 2nd August.

There were two processions of two men each yesterday, one man being from Amraoti, one Wardha, one from Bombay, and one from Dhulia. The crowd at the brigade was about 150. The processions were started off by Vaidya, and three volunteers were sent with them to guide them. One application for pardon was received from a man from the Akola Jail, and there were eight applications for release on personal bond (one from Akola). Halve, Ambulkar, and Jainendra Kumar were convicted, and each, sentenced to six months' rigorous plus one months' simple and a fine of Rs. 50. There was one arrest at the station.

2. Government has already been informed by the C. I. D. (S. B.) of the new programme under which the main battle ground is to be transferred to the railway station and batches of 15 volunteers are to arrive each day. The programme starts from the 29th July and so far has not adhered to.

3. A meeting was held at the Town Hall last night and was addressed by the two Patel, the audience being about one thousand. Munjee and Cholkar were both present, and the former was proposed for the chair but refused to take it. The speeches made by the two Patels are interesting and may be taken to indicate the lines on which the attack in council will develop. I have therefore thought it better not to boil them down for the purpose of this report but to enclose the police report in original with the copy of this which goes to the Commissioner. Both speeches contain direct incitements to the people of Nagpur to join in the flag movement, and were delivered with an obvious eye on the council. The only point on which it is necessary for me to comment at present is Vithalbhai's assurance, given as a responsible servant of the Congress, that Satyagraha has not the slightest intention of annoying Europeans or hoisting the national flag on Government buildings or insulting the Union Jack. As pointed out by the Times of India in a recent leading article, not one of the persons who made the statements attributed to them in the last Government communique has publicly denied that he used the words attributed to him. This belated assurance is therefore only a move in the game. Another point which speakers like Vithalbhai do not seem to appreciate is that whatever rights of this nature a man may consider that he possesses, common decency and good nature will stop him from exercising them if he sees that their exercise annoys other people—however unjustified he may privately consider that annoyance to be. Every man, for instance, has a right to whistle in a public restaurant, but if his fellow diners complain, he cannot be suprised if the manager chucks him out. The

meeting was closed with a short speech by Tijare in which he definitely asked that people should come forward and volunteer to celebrate the anniversary of Tilak's death.

4. A press telegram sent by R. Gopal to the Bombay Chronicle contained the following "The leaders of the flag movement are at present carrying on their fight under adverse circumstances. * * * *. It is not certain who, and at what moment, of the remaining workers will be elected by the police to be prosecuted. * * * *. The disingenuous propaganda of the Government Publicity Officer is trying its best to discredit the movement. However, Satyagrahais are determined to fight to their last guns (sic). Speculation is rife among the people as to what would happen when the term of the order under section 144 expires."

5. I would ask that the police report may be returned to me when it is no longer required. As it is lengthy, I have not had time to have it copied out.

In Home Department telegram of the 18th July we asked for an appreciation of the Flag situation. This the Central Provinces Government said is contained in their forthnightly report for the first half of that month the substance of which was not telegraphed to the Secretary of State on the ground that it contained nothing of importance. This report was sent long ago to the India Office with others from other Governments. Further details of the movement are given in the report for the second half of July which has also been transmitted to England. Please also see the report of the District Magistrate, Nagpur, dated the 2nd August 1923. The Central Provinces for the first half of August has not yet been received. We may telegraph as in the draft submitted.

J. McD.,—21-8-23.

J. Crerar,—21-8-23.

Serial no. 17.—Telegram to the Central Provinces Government, no. 1387, dated the 21st August 1923.

Serial no. 18.—Telegram from the Secretary of State, no. 3087, dated the 21st August 1923.

Serial no. 19.—Telegram to the Central Provinces Government, no. D.-1889, dated the 22nd August 1923.

Serial no. 20.—Telegram from the Central Provinces Government, no. 146-A., dated the 23rd August 1923.

The report my be communicated to the Secretary of State as in the draft submitted for approval. His Excellency should first see. It will be seen that full information has been communicated to Hon'ble Member at Calcutta, demi-officially.

J. McD.,—24-8-23.

The draft is for approval. The Secretary of State asked for the reasons of the Central Provinces Government but no reasons have been given. The reasons are fairly obvious and we may send the telegram without comment. My own feeling is that the Central Provinces Government went too far in the matter of compromise. His Excellency should see.

G. H. W. Davies,—24-8-23.

It is necessary I think to indicate the views of the Government of India on the action taken by the local Government.

2. We had no intimation of the intention of the Central Provinces Government to negotiate and on this point Sir M. Hailey's telegram of the 3rd July is relevant. We pointed out clearly that the assurances which would alone justify the withdrawal of the order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code must bear directly on specific grounds for Government's action hitherto, *viz.*, vindication of law and maintenance of order. The actual terms of the present agreement go far to satisfy the stipulations in our telegram. In view of this and of the fact that the agreement promises to abate what had become rather a public muisance than a serious that agitation, I think that we should support as far as possible the action taken, though I must confess that I am doubtful of the desirability both of negotiating at all, and, in particular, of the permission to hold a second procession.

An addendum to the draft in the above sense is submitted

3. I think we should advise the local Government that releases should not include any prisoners convicted of offences involving violence or guilty of any serious prison offence after conviction. We may also inform them of our general approval of the course taken.

J. Crerar,—24-8-23.

His Excellency agrees that the substance of the Central Provinces Government's telegram of 23rd August should be telegraphed at once to the Secretary of State and that it should be stated in the communication that the comments of the Government of India will follow when one point, on which information has been sought from the Central Provinces Government by clear the line telegram, has been elucidated.

2. His Excellency considers that enquiry may be made by the Home Department from the Government of the Central Provinces whether the release of prisoners was part of the agreement with representative of Congress Committee or whether anything was said to them which might be construed as a promise or as an indication of future action. If release of prisoners was not part of the agreement Central Provinces may be asked to defer general release until they have heard again from the Government of India on the point. In any case, they should be asked not to release those guilty of violence or of serious jail offences.

G. F. deMontmorency,—25-8-23.

Issue drafts to Secretary of State to Government of Central Provinces respectively.

J. Crerar,—25-8-23.

Serial no. 21.—Telegram to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, no. 694, dated the 25th August 1923.

Serial no. 22.—Clear the line telegram to Central Provinces Government, no. D.-2214-Poll. dated the 25th August 1923.

Serial no. 23.—Telegram from the Government of Central Provinces, no. C.-43, dated the 26th August 1923.

It is clear from the Central Provinces Government's telegram of 26th that though no actual undertaking for the release of prisoners was given, there was a pretty definite understanding to this effect. Otherwise the reference to 'distrust of British good faith' and to the procession after the release of prisoners would be meaningless.

Whatever may be said of the decision to negotiate at all, if the understanding regarding release and if the second procession, it seems clear that interference with any material point of the settlement would involve the local Government in a charge of breach of faith and probably lead to an aggravated recrudescence of the agitation. It appears therefore that the " fact exampli " should be accepted. Drafts to the Secretary of State and the Central Provinces Government are submitted.

J. Crerar,—27-8-23.

His Excellency does not approve of the draft *vide* his marginal notes on draft. Will Mr. Crerar kindly ring me up and I will explain further. His Excellency's objections mainly rest in the two news paper cuttings below received with the Central Provinces telegram of August 23rd.

G. F. de Montmorency,—27-8-23.

In the Central Provinces telegram about the Nagpur flag business there is a sentence about the Home Member of the Central Provinces Government discussing " *repatriation* " of released prisoners with Mr. Pala. His Excellency thought this improper; but as it is a minor point, he does not wish to raise it: but he wishes the Secretary, Home Department, to discuss with him what *repatriation* means.

I explained to His Excellency the system prevailing in most provinces, by which when a convict is sentenced, he may be imprisoned in any jail in the province and transferred from one jail to another; but eventually when he is about to be released one of two courses are usually taken, either he is transferred to a jail near his home* and his release takes place there or he is given a free warrant on realease to his home railway station (*e.g.*, the Sikh prisoners from Amritsar who were confined in the Attock jail).

E.g. Mohammad Ali's transfer to the Jhansi Jail.

H. E. observed that there seemed to be something almost Gilberton in a situation where the extremists pay the tickets of persons from S. Madura or Guzerat to come to Nagpur to annoy Government and commit a technical offence and at the end of the sentence or on release from a well deserved punishment in conviction the Government are at pains and expense to repatriate them to their homes.

G. F. de Montmorency,—27-8-23.

Two drafts to the Secretary of State and the Government of the Central Provinces which have been approved by H. M. are submitted for His Excellency's consideration.

J. Crerar,—31-8-23.

His Excellency approves.

G. F. de Montmorency,—31-8-23.

J. Crerar,—1-9-23.

Serial no. 24.—Telegram to C. P. Government, no. D.-2227, dated 1st September 1923.

Serial no. 25.—Telegram to the Secretary of State, no. P.-710, dated 1st September 1923.

Serial no. 26.—Telegram from C. P. Government, dated the 6th September 1923.

Secretary of State may be informed. Draft telegram submitted.

J. McD.,—7-9-23.

May issue. Afterwards H. E. may see.

G. H. W. Davies,—7-9-23.

W. M. H[ailey],—7-9-23.

Serial no. 27.—Telegram to Secretary of State, no. P.-732, dated 8th September 1923.

H. E. has seen.

G. F. de Montmorency,—11-9-23.

Seen.

J. Crerar,—11-9-23.

Serial no. 28.—Letter from the Government of the C. P., no. 1278-1087-II, dated 12th September 1923.

A copy of the C. P. Government's resolution may be sent without comment to the S. of S. No other action is necessary.

J. Crerar,—17-9-23.

The action may be taken.

W. M. H[ailey],—17-9-23.

Draft to the India Office submitted

J. McD.,—19-9-23.

G. H. W. Davies,—19-9-23.

Serial no. 29.—To H. M.'s Under Secretary of State, no. 128, dated 20th September 1923.

Serial no. 30.—Telegram from the Secretary of State for India, no. 3413, dated 20th September 1923.

The S. of S.'s telegram cannot be transmitted verbatim to the Government of the Central Provinces, but it seems proper that they should be informed of the principal points they are required to meet. The draft is for approval.

J. Crerar,—22-9-23.

H. E. saw the fresh receipt this morning and said that he supposed Home Department would convoy the gist of it to C. P. Government and ask for a report. In the circumstances perhaps it will not be necessary to submit the draft to H. E.

G. F. de Montmorency,—22-9-23

The telegram may issue.

J. Crerar,—24-9-23.

Serial no. 31.—Telegram to C. P. Government, no. D.-2476-Poll., dated 24th September 1923.

I had wanted three papers in order to make a full study of the question, so I thought that these were aspects which we should be obliged to consider, even if S. S. did not ask us to do so. But he has now wired to us (I have had the telegram placed on the file) and we must await the C. P. answer.

W. M. H[ailey],—25-9-23.

Serial no. 32.—Letter from the Government of the C. P., no. 163-I, dated the 1st October 1923.

The Secretary of State has asked for a full report by mail on the whole matter of the Nagpur flag incident with the comments of the Government of India. The report from the C. P. Government has now been received.

2. The flying of the national flag began to assume prominence in the latter half of 1922. There had been earlier demonstrations at Bangalore and Bhagalpur but the present agitation commenced with a resolution of the Jubbulpore Municipality in July 1922 to present an address of welcome to the Civil Disobedience Committee and to hoist the national flag on the Municipal buildings. The local Government and the Government of India thought it wise to ignore this action of the Municipality but subsequently at the instance of the Secretary of State the Government of India took steps to prevent the flag from being flown on the buildings of Municipality and other local bodies and in their letter no. D.-7341, (Poll. File no. 941 of 1922), dated the 17th August 1922 they issued general instructions on the subject of flying the flag. In March 1923 signs of organised attempts to fly the flag were perceived at Jubbulpore and the persons behind this movement shortly afterwards shifted their ground to Nagpur, where the battle royal was waged. On the 6th June the Congress sitting at Nagpur decided to take up the flag movement as an all-India affair and to extend the agitation to other provinces. Sporadic but unimportant outbursts of flag-flying occurred in Bengal, Bombay and elsewhere and the 18th July was proclaimed as an all India flag day when the flag was flown in several places in India. The movement did not take on and by the middle of August, it may safely be said, all general interest in it had ceased except so far as regards the struggle at Nagpur and its effects, an account of which is given in the P. U. C.

3. It is not easy to estimate correctly what was the driving force at the back of the movement and what is its exact significance on the political situation. The movement I think originally arose as an expression of national sentiment. The apostles of non-co-operation had for some time been preaching national self-reliance, boycott and Khaddar and it was natural that a desire for an emblem of national significance should spring up. The fact that the adoption of a national flag would be resented by the members of a Satanic Government as an insult to the Union Jack doubtless lent a fillip to the idea, and if as they thought probable, the Government took strong measures to put down the national flag, this incident would afford a fine rallying ground for the party and would furnish a useful battle-cry against Government. They were hampered, however, by the fact that by the creed of their party they were pledged nominally to non-provocative measures and they had to keep in the background the provocative aspect of their programme and as Government steadily refused " to hang men and women for the wearing of the green " or to take repressive measures against casual exhibitions of the flag, their guns were spiked from the start. Their difficulties were intensified because the Swaraj party which was daily growing in strength was bent on obtaining for its own ends an effective position in the Government of the country and was entirely opposed to frittering away its energies on a campaign which, however great a victory it might bring in matters spiritual, would have little effect on practical politics and would bring no real power in the material world. In fact the cleavage within the ranks f the Congress had become so pronounced that the time when the flag agitation at Nagpur reached its height that the Swaraj party were anxious to see the no-change party (who ran the flag movement) defeated in their battle with Government. The governing factors therefore appear to have been that the No-change party were

anxious to obtain a victory for non-violent non-co-operation that would exalt their party in the eyes of the Swarajists, that they did not openly desire to clamour for severance of the English connection, that they were precluded by their creed from pressing the provocative aspect of their programme and that the Government refused to take offence where possibly offence was meant. Moreover, there was a large body of loyal Indian opinion that would regard an insult to the Union Jack as an insult to the Crown. The movement accordingly was proclaimed to be a form of Satagrayha or civil disobedience, an attempt to assert the rights of the individual as against the laws enforced by a Satanic Government.

4. On the other hand the position of the Government was not easy. Every Englishman I full sure, resented that flag movement first and foremost on the round that it offered an insult to the Union Jack and Government must have shared this sentiment. But the admission that the blow had gone home would only encourage more blows and the agitation if encouraged by repression might easily grow to alarming dimensions. Moreover, the weapons of defence were limited. Flying the national flag, however much it might be reprobated, was not in itself an offence and there was no certain ground for action unless the movement developed into an attack on Government in its functions of maintaining law and order. The Government therefore controlled their injured feelings and ignored the movement as far as possible, until it came into collision with Government on an issue on which it could be safely fought. Before long the tactics adopted by the Nagpur agitators furnished such an issue. In carrying out their programme of flag-processions as a part of civil disobedience, they came within the scope of the preventive sections of the Criminal Procedure Code because they annoyed certain sections of the community and they clashed with the police because they refused to observe the law relating to the conduct of processions in public places. The Government of the C. P. were not slow to seize the opportunity to fight from a strong tactical position. The District Magistrate issued an order under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code on 1st May prohibiting meetings and processions within part of the area of the civil station and again a fresh order under the same section on 18th June extending the prohibited area. The latter order would expire on 18th August and could not be repeated unless there was likelihood of a riot or an affray.

5. It is quite clear from the proceedings of the C. P. Legislative Council that towards the beginning of August pressure was brought on the local Government to compromise and the Council proceedings for 7th-9th August showed that the majority of the Council disapproved of the action taken by the Government. In fact the Hon. Mr. Joshi admitted at a later date that pressure from the Council had forced the Government to release the prisoners. The Government appear to have yielded to this pressure because they were weary of the struggle which was holding up the ordinary administration and because they were in doubt as to their ability to succeed in retaining command of the position without the help of section 144. The daily average number of volunteers coming forward in August showed a considerable increase.

Vide cutting from 'Statesman.'
K. W.

6. The main points of the compromise agreed to by the Government were logical enough from their point of view. They had fought on the grounds of law and order and submission to authority and once the flag party yielded in these matters they saw no point in continuing the struggle. They imposed conditions that turned the procession in "a funeral procession" instead of a triumphal procession. They had to give away something to effect the compromise so they agreed to release the prisoners, an act which was likely to appease popular opinion and which seemed innocuous now that law and order had been vindicated. From their point of view there could be no strong objection to a second procession on similar terms to the first.

7. The question is what judgment is to be passed on this act of compromise. I have attempted to show that the C. P. Government were driven by circumstances to fight on somewhat narrow issues and those issues they proved victorious. At the time I cannot help feeling that the C. P. Government was rather like a mouse in a cage; they could see no world beyond the walls of their little prison. The Union Jack was undoubtedly flouted because the Swaraj flag was allowed to be carried in procession through the civil station; and it does not really make much difference that the Swarajists declared that they intended no insult and agreed not to carry their procession through what is euphemously described as "the strictly residential portion of the civil station." And the feelings of annoyance of the resident in the Civil Station can hardly have been lessened by the knowledge that their patriotic objections had become of no account to Government, as no longer furnishing a legal ground of action under section 144. The granting of permission to hold the second possession which did not eventually take place was even a worse mistake from this point of view. As regards the release of the prisoners, I think a wholesale release was injudicious. There could not be much harm in releasing those who were confined for not giving security or for disobeying the order under section 144, particularly as the majority of them were mere tools in the hands of unscrupulous persons; but it is more difficult to justify the release of persons who had deliberately organised a criminal conspiracy to defy law and order. It is true that the retention of these men in jail would have marred the effect of the amnesty and would have proved a standing source of embarrassment to the

Government, but the dangerous doctrine that men by professing repentance can escape the consequences of their actions is much too prevalent in this country. I do not, however, think that much blame can be attached to the C. P. Government for the action that they took. Their attention was naturally focussed on the early cessation of an irritating and embarrassing struggle, in which on the whole local feeling did not suppport them, and they saw a way to secure a victory on the issues on which the battle was fought. There can, however, be no question that the flag-flying incident as a whole was of more than merely local interest and they should certainly have consulted the Government of India before deciding to enter into negotiations and, particularly in view of our letter of the 9th February 1923, before releasing the prisoners.

8. The end of the struggle appears to have been hailed as a victory by the "No-Change" newspapers and generally speaking as a defeat by the Anglo-Indian and Swaraj newspapers. The attitude adopted by the Anglo-Indian press was due to their reluctance to attach any importance to a discreditable performance and due to the fact that the issue had been narrowed down to a battle between civil disobedience and law and order. The Swaraj organs were only too glad to seize the opportunity of pouring contempt on their political opponents and attempting to make capital out of their mistakes.

9. It would seem appropriate to address the Secretary of State in a despatch and in commenting on the incident we may lay stress on the following points :—

(*a*) The instigators of the movement made an injudicious choice of an instrument of agitation—there no was no deep seated feeling in the country in favour of a national flag.

(*b*) They made an injudicious choice of the time for this agitation—the Swaraj party which was growing in strength and vociferousness was hostile from the start.

(*d*) Partly through the restraint of Government and partly as the result of their creed the agitators were compelled to fight on an unfavourable battle-ground.

(*e*) The C. P. Government adopted sound tactics in fighting on the ground of law and order and localising the struggle as far as possible.

(*f*) The C. P. Government showed too great anxiety to compromise at any cost. Their hands were forced by local sentiment, by the fact that the expiry of the order under section 144 would weaken their armoury, and by weariness of the struggle which to them appeared to be increasing in intensity. From their point of view the terms of the compromise were not unsatisfactory, but it is impossible to treat the incident as of merely local significance. The wholesale release of the prisoners and the permission to hold a second procession were liable to be represented as admissions of wrong and were likely to have a repercussion outside the province. They should have consulted the Government of India before entering into negotiations on these matters.

(*g*) In the light of subsequent happenings it is difficult to say that the action of the C. P. Government has resulted in any untoward effects. Circumstances have prevented the anti-Government press from uniting to hail a victory and politicians are much too busy with preparations for the coming eletions to think much about the Nagpur campaign ; but organised flag-flying will quite probably occur in the future and it may be doubted whether the hands of Government have been strengthened for dealing with agitation by the results of the struggle at Nagpur.

10. The replies to the four questions specifically addressed to the C. P. Government are :—

(*i*) When negotiations were opened the local Government had reason to believe that the agitation was increasing in force. I questio whether their assumption was altogether correct. Locally th number of volunteers may have been increasing, but I think that the country generally was beginning to realise that the agitation was futile and it may be doubted whether funds would have been forthcoming for long to continue the battle.

(*ii*) The local Government admit that they should have consulted the Government of India before releasing the prisoners. As regards the processions they contend that they merely followed the policy approved by the Government of India. Logically this contention is correct as has been pointed out, but the struggle was of more than local interest and I think we should have been consulted.

(*iii*) The local Govrnment claim that their decis on to allow the processions was logical and cannot be regarded as a triumph for the flag movement or an admission that their policy was wrong. Here again they seem to be right from their own point of view, but they seem to be wrong when the general significance of the incident is considered. But circumstances have prevented any general claim of victory for the agitators.

(*iv*) The local Government claim that they did not modify their original attitude recently justified in the Legislative Council. I have gone through the debates and this contention seems to be correct, both with regard to the speeches of the Home Member and to the statement made by the H. E. the Governor, which is referred to in para. 8 of the paper under consideration.

G. H. W. Davies,—12-10-23.

It will be necessary for H. E. to read the C. P. letter, and Mr. Davies' note from page 10 gives a useful summary of the various aspects of this incident. I need not recapitulate and proceed to give at once my own conclusions on the matter.

2. From the first the 'National Flag' controversy never was,—and by its nature could never have been, a purely local issue. Earlier incidents at Jubbulpore forced it on the attention of the Central Provinces, and those incidents as the C. P. Government were aware, had attracted wide attention both in India and England. When therefore the demonstrations at Nagpur assumed the aspect of a concerted campaign, the C. P. Government rightly took up the challenge. In view of the fact that the exhibition of the Flag was not in itself an offence, their legal position was not an easy one; but they maintained a sound, firm and perfectly, consistent policy in regard to flag processions. Their local officers behaved with discretion and restraint, and were successful in preventing any incidents which could give vitality and substance to what was really a factitious agitation. The movement commanded little support, but attracted wide interest outside the province; yet the interest did not extend to general sympathy with the agitators. Moderate opinion was opposed to them; the swarajist party was lukewarm where it did not openly criticize the expenditure of energy and enthusiasm in so mistaken a cause. So much was this the case that towards the middle of July it appeared likely that the movement would collapse.

3. The apprehension of this failure was indeed so imminent that the extreme Congress party at large decided to come to the assistance of the agitators from the C. P. and Gujerat who had hitherto mainly interested themselves in the movement. But this fact, if it threatened increased embarrassment to the Central Provinces Government, also affected their own position. The issue had never really been local it now become more than ever, and on a wider scale, a contest between the general administration and the forces organized against it. The Central Provinces Government itself recognized this; the Governor had recently personally consulted the Viceroy and the Government of India and could have been under no mistake as to their attitude towards the new phase of the operations. To all appearances the Governor was prepared to continue to take a firm line against the agitation, in spite of the obvious embarrassment caused to his local officers and the general administration of this province. In his speech to the local Council on the 6th August he said:—

> "The Local Government regards this agitation as clearly Civil Disobedience, an attempt to overcome the authority of Government, and is determined that this challenge to lawful authority, this defiance of the law, should be resisted with all the resources at its command. In this policy it confidently hopes for the support of all law-abiding citizens, including the members of this Council."

4. A few days after he had delivered that speech, his Council passed two resolutions calling for the withdrawal of the prohibition orders and the release of the prisoners. In both cases the majority against Government was narrow; and I hold that in view of the character which this conflict had assumed, a local Government could not allow to a vote of this kind the influence it might have carried in a purely local matter. Indeed the only new feature in the situation at this stage—apart from the wider scope which the agitation was taking under the influence of the Congress—was the fact that the order of the Magistrate was about to expire (it would expire on 17th August) under the ordinary operation of the law. In the debate of the 7th August the Home Member referred to this fact, and stated that the order would not be renewed unless there existed a likelihood of an affray. The legal position is fully stated in paragraph 2 of the Central Provinces letter, and the Home Member was perfectly correct in the attitude he took up on this aspect of the question. But the provisions of 30 (1) and 30 (2) of the Police Act remained, and the local Government was by no means without means of maintaining the policy announced by the Governor. The Police Superintendent could under 30 (1) prescribe the route of processions and under 30 (2) require a license to be taken out if in the opinion of the Magistrate there was danger of a breach of the peace. It is maintained in the C. P. letter that the Magistrate could give no such opinon. Up to the 17th August he was maintaining in force a prohibition order which had validity only if his prohibition was "likely to prevent annoyance to any person lawfully employed or a disturbance of the public tranquillity or a riot or affray." Apparently the C. P. hold that the Magistrate could certify to the likelihood of annoyance, but not of a breach of the peace. I am unwilling to suggest that the Magistrate should have stained the point against his convictions; it was unnecessary in the interests of the Government policy that he should do so; for the Superintendent could, and did issue an order under 30 (1) specifying the roads through which a procession could not be taken without his permission. The roads

specified were those running through the residential portion of the Civil Station. If that order has been disobeyed, the Magistrate could have renewed his prohibitory order under 144 Cr. P. C. and the Government position would again have been the same as that occupied by it during the preceding two months.

5. I have analysed the legal aspect of the position because it may perhaps be assumed that the local Government were obliged to abate something of their attitude owing to a deficiency in the legal measures at their disposal. I do not think that this justification can be pleaded; they did not give the procedure under the Police Act a trial. Admittedly they would have been obliged to allow processions over any except the prohibited roads, even without permission; or would have been obliged to give permission to go over the prohibited roads, if a license were applied for, and proper guarantees given. But this involved an abandonment by the opposition of the claims they had put forward; and it did not seem likely that they would yield to this extent. If they had, the victory of Government would have been complete. Certainly neither we nor any of those who had been supporting the Central Provinces Government in the Press, would have had any cause to complain.

6. As I have said, they did not give the new procedure a trial. They accepted an offer of negotiation from the opposition. As His Excellency is aware, they had been warned of the possible dangers of such negotiations; nevertheless, I should not be disposed to complain of their action, if they had gone into the interviews in the proper spirit. Our whole judgment of the question indeed depends on our view of the objective which the Government should have had before it when its members saw the Patels. At the stage at which the matter had reached, ought they to have determined to stand by the order under the Police Act and face the consequences; or were they justified in attempting any kind of compromise? The first action would admittedly have been contrary to the wishes of their Council; it would have prolonged the contest; it would have added to the embarrassmen caused by the long conflict in which they had already engaged. Nevertheless, I hold that it was the only course open to them. If the conflict was not being waged on a real issue, and was an open contest between Government and civil disobedience, then I maintain that once having accepted the challenge they should have seen the matter through. Any compromise inevitably involved a reflection on the correctness of the attitude they had taken up for the last two months; any accommodation would inevitably strengthen the hands of the party of non-co-operation.

7. As a result of these negotiations, the opposition admittedly made many concessions. They were obliged to agree that they would only take a procession over an agreed route and in an orderly manner; they were obliged also to agree that as the result of the compromise future agitation should cease. It was unfortunate that the local Government should not have insisted on a formal application for permission to take the procession out; for the "intimation" which they admitted in its place did not contain an admission that it was only proposed to take it out over the roads and in the manner already agreed upon. The opposition was consequently able to claim *more suo* that they had not asked for permission, but had only asserted their intention. That was a mistake of detail for which the local Government has paid somewhat dearly, though it is exactly what might have been expected when admitting the Patels to negotiation. It was unfortunate that they did not obtain a formal agreement that Satyagraha should cease after the procession, for here again the Patels were, in the absence of such an an agreement, able to perjure themselves to their friends. From one further somewhat unfortunate concession, namely, that there should be a second procession when prisoners were released, they were apparently saved by the disinclination of the opposition to repeat the funeral experience of the first day.

8. These however are comparatively minor matters, not calling for animadversion. It is no discredit to be euchred when one plays cards with the Devil; the mistake lies in sitting down with him at all. But we are bound to look with disfavour on the fact that the local Government first of all deliberately set out to secure a crompromise on a matter affecting the Government of India and other local Governments without even intimating to us that they intended to do so; and secondly that in order to secure a compromise they had to agree to release their prisoners. The papers forwarded to us do not contain any statement that the latter condition was explicity made by the Patels or agreed to by Government: and the telegram sent to us on the 23rd August, in response to our enquiries, avoided reference to it. Their telegram of the 26th, in reply to a definite question on the subject said that the Patels were informed that "no undertaking could be given on the subject and that they must trust in the judgment and good intentions of Government." But since the local Government held (*vide* the same telegram) that failure to release would be regarded as justifying non-co-operation and distrust (?) of British good faith, we may reasonably hold that the condition was implied in the negotiations; and this is confirmed by the insertion of a definite agreement that a second procession should take place when the prisoners were released. The local Government admits that it overlooked our instructions in coming to a decision to release the prisoners without consulting us. I think myself that their error goes further back.

9. As to the exact effect of the compromise, opinions may differ. The local Government claims that it has done no good to extremists, has been welcomed by moderates and has been treated by Swarajists as a triumph for Government. There is to my mind little doubt that it has done real harm to Government. It certainly strengthened the hands of the extremist party at the Delhi Congress and the Purbandak Committee has quoted it not once but a hundred times as an encouragement to its followers. It may indeed be claimed that it has ended the National Flag demonstrations. For a time, it seems to have done so; and this would have been a distinct gain if it had thereby done anything to damp the ardour or discourage the efforts of non-co-operators. The flag demonstrations were only a gesture in a long campaign of attack on Government; their cessation has not abated the desire, nor reduced the ability of non-co-operation to attack us in other directions.

10. We have not failed to see the difficulties of he local Government nor to appreciate the embarrassment caused to their administration by this campaign. But I think that our conclusion on the whole affair must be in the sense I have indicated. In almost every contingency I prefer to support a local Government against the criticism of the Secretary of State, even when it is wrong, but the criticisms of the Secretary of State in this case unfortunately coincide with those which we had already formulated ourselves.

W. M. H[ailey],—16-10-23.

I agree with Sir M. Hailey. I am not disposed to view too critically the various minor matters refered to by Sir Malcolm and I am in complete accord with him that these minor matters do not call for animadversion. But the negotiations should never have been commenced without consultation with the Government of India in view of the importance to Central Government of other local Governments of maintaining authority unimpaired to the end. I can understand the desire of C. P. Government to rid themselves of the embarrassing situation but in the circumstances they ought not to have acted on their own judgment and especially after they had consulted Government of India and had agreed upon the cause of action; again in regard to the release of prisoners it would appear that an implied understanding was arrived at by C. P. Government with Patel, and in this they were undoubtedly wrong. My view is substantially the same as that of Sir M. Hailey in treating these as the important questions. It is necessary to emphasise them as there is danger of Provincial Governments taking action based upon local considerations and embarrassments without regard to the effect upon the rest of India.

R[eading],—18-10-23.

W. M. H[ailey],—19-10-23.

Demi-official from the Hon'ble Sir W. M. Hailey, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Member of Viceroy's Council and In charge Home Department, to Sir G. F. de Montmorency, K.C.V.O., C.I.E., C.B.E., I.C.S., Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy, dated Simla, the 19th October 1923.

His Excellency asked me this morning in connection with the Nagpur Flag case to examine the point whether our telegram to the Central Provinces issued on receipt of their explanation of the circumstances connected with the compromise did not in itself require an answer from the local Government.

I have examined the papers and find that the facts are as follows:—The local Government did not of course inform us of the result of their negotiations. We pressed for news on the 22nd August in view of what we had seen in the Press; on the 23rd they sent us their explanation which we repeated to the Secretray of State and at the same time asked on the 25th for further information whether anything that had been said could be construed as a promise that prisoners would be released. They replied on the 26th and on the first September we sent them our considered views. We regretted that they considered it necessary, as we inferred from their telegram to be the case, to enter into an understanding involving the release of prisoners. On this point, in view of our orders of the 9th February 1923 and of the effect on the general political situation of the action proposed, we stated that we considered that we should have been previously consulted.

On the 6th September they merely informed us that the civil disobedience prisoners had been released; there were no demonstrations and no second flag procession through the prohibited areas. On the 8th they sent us a copy of their published resolution giving a history of the case and referring to the action of various officers concerned in it. They did not answer our telegram of the 1st September which had implied a censure on them for agreeing to the release of prisoners and had pointed out their neglect of the definite instructions of February 1923. It was not until we forwarded to them a copy of the Secretary of State's telegram of the 20th September calling for further information that they acknowledged the incorrectness of their action in this respect. In short they neither acknowledged the receipt nor protested against the tenor of our criticisms until the 1st October when, as I say, they were answering a demand not from us but from the Secretary of State.

A draft Despatch to the Secretary of State is submitted.

J. Crerar,—20-10-23.

W. M. H[ailey],—20-10-23.

H. E. has approved with a few alterations.

G. F. de Montmorency,—20-10-23.

This should now issue.

J. Crerar,—21-10-23.

Serial no. 33.—Despatch to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, no. 5, dated the 6th December 1923.

Demi-official from Sir W. Marris I.C.S., United Provinces, to the Hon'ble Sir W. M. Hailey K.C.I.E., I.C.S., Member of the Viceroy's Council and In charge Home Department, dated 4th, December 1923.

Is there any likelihood that the Home Department will address local Governments about anti-Government political activities on the parts of local bodies like Municipalities and district Boards? I spoke to H. E. about it and suggested to him that enquiry on the subject by the Government of India would be useful.

(I am answering this.)—

This refers back, I think, to Sir W. Marris' letter 30th March 1923, paragraph 5, to which I replied in the third paragraph of my letter 3rd June 1923.

I have noticed little in recent provincial reports on this subject, save in so far as relates to attempts to give addresses to the Ali Brothers and similar undesirables. But it is a matter which may at any time assume prominence. The Swaraj Flag demonstration seems for the time to be dead, and it was always so pass an issue that I should doubt if it will be revised. But there are other and graver directions in which well wishers can be har assed, and I think he should make enquiry. We can say that we have noticed references to action taken by local bodies under influences explicity antagonistic to Government, and should be glad if local Government could give us any information on the subject based on the experience of the last two years. Action of the nature referred to appears to take two directions, demonstratives such as presentations of addresses to ex-convicts or internees, attempts to fly the swaraj flag, exhibition of portraits of Tilak and other opponents of Government, and more serious attacks, such as resolutions in favour of boycotting British or Empire goods, we are not aware whether local bodies have gone further, and committed themselves to action which would harrass or discriminate against European ratepayers or persons who are believed to be wellwishers of Government. We should be glad therefore of any material which local Governments can give us as assisting a study of this aspect of the question, and would also inform us of any steps which they have felt it in their power to take in order to meet the undesirable political activities of local bodies.

W. M. H[ailey],—5-12-23.

Draft D. O. submitted for approval.

J. M. C. D. 13/12/23.

J. Crerar,—13-12-23.

Demi-official letter from the Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department to the Chief Secretary of all local Governments and Administrations, etc., no. D.-2909, dated 14th-15th December 1923.

The Government of India have noticed from time to time both in the press and in official reports references to action taken by local bodies under influences explicitly antagonistic to Government and they would be glad to have any information on the matter, based on the experience of the last two years, that the Government of $\frac{\text{Madras etc.}}{\text{Bombay}}$ $\frac{}{\text{you}}$ can furnish.

2. Action of the nature referred to appears to take two directions, demonstrations such as presentations of the addresses of welcome to ex-convicts, and ex-internees, attempts to fly the so-called Swaraj flag, exhibitions of portraits of Tilak and other opponents of Government, and more serious attacks such as resolutions in the favour of boycotting British or Empire goods. The Government of India are not aware whether local bodies have gone further and committed themselves to action which would harass or discriminate against European taxpayers or persons who are believed to be well-wishers of Government. But they would be glad to have any material that is forthcoming to assist them in a study of this aspect of the question, whether the details of any action which $\frac{\text{the local Government has felt in its}}{\text{you have felt in your}}$ power to take in order to meet the activities referred to.

Serial no. 34.—Despatch from H. M.'s Secretary of State for India, no. 4 Public, dated 24th January 1924.

For information only.

J. M. C. D.,—21-2-24.

C. W. Gwynne,—22-2-24.

MC216HD—6—19-3-24—G of I P Simla

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 1.—Telegram P., from the Chief Secreta y to the Government of Central Provinces, o the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department no. C.-879—II, dated Pachmarhi, the 9th June 1923.

Clear the Line.—More volunteers than were anticipated have been attracted by civil disobedience at Nagpur and over 400 arrests have been reported. In the hope that support from outside the province would not be forthcoming local Government has hitherto refrained from starting criminal cases under section 120-B. of the Indian Penal Code against Congress leaders. But it seems clear now that the disobedience has the support of the All-India Congress Committee and that volunteers will arrive from other provinces, principally from Gujrat. Another difficulty (it) is that prohibitory order under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code expires on July 1st and there is legal difficulty about its extension or issue of new order. Local Government have therefore decided to arrest Congress leaders concerned at Nagpur and to institute ciriminal prosecution under 120 Indian Penal Code for which it is believed that the evidence available will secure conviction. This step may effect political situation in other parts of India and increase the amount of help for Nagpur civil disobedience from different provinces, and the local Government therefore enquires whether the Government of India desire to give any advice before this step is taken.

Serial No. 3.—Telegram from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, no. 1387-D., dated the 10th June 1923.

Clear the Line.—Telegram received from Central Provinces stating that owing to number of volunteers arriving from other provinces, principally from Gujrat, they contemplate taking steps against congress leaders under section 120-B., Indian Penal Code. This may ultimately involve prosecution of certain leaders in Bombay as well as those in the Central Provinces. Government of India would be greatly obliged if Government of Bombay would wire immediately their views if such action would prove embarrassing.

M C216 PD

Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Telegram P., No. 460, 10th June 1923. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

Swaraj Flag. Reference Home Department Despatch No. 3-Political, dated 31st May 1923. The report on political situation in Central Provinces for fortnight ending 31st May states that the political attention at Nagpur has been concentrated largely on Swaraj Flag demonstration. So far the number of Satyagrahis convicted is 262. The movement is little supported in Nagpur and recruits are being brought from outlying districts. The leaders admitted that the Swaraj Flag incident was merely a pretext for Satyagraha; that in any case Jamnalal Bajaj intended to initiate Satyagraha at Nagpur early in May. Sentences of rigorous imprisonment inflicted on earlier Satyagrahis affected recruitment. Leaders therefore decided that instead of groups of ten or more advancing with flag at stated hours, smaller numbers should proceed at irregular intervals, thus rendering themselves liable under section 188, Indian Penal Code, to simple imprisonment not exceeding one month. A poor audience was attracted by these tactics. The number of Satyagrahis released on apologising and giving undertaking not to engage in political activities for one year is 26. Notwithstanding decision of leaders not to undertake Satyagraha in Jubbulpore, but to concentrate at Nagpur; Satyagraha occurred on three occasions in Jubbulpore in form of an attempt to hoist flag on Town Hall. In spite of resolution of Municipal Committee that flag should not be flown, a small procession accompanied by large crowd on 20th May proceeded to Town Hall where two servants of building were assaulted and flag hoisted by four volunteers. These men along with four leaders were arrested and are under trial. At Jubbulpore there is little organisation and the Local Government considers that it is unlikely that civil disobedience will be practised as at Nagpur.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 5.—Telegram from the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. S. D.-983, dated the 12th June 1923.

Please see your telegram no. 1387-D., dated the 10th instant. If the proposals of the Central Provinces Government involve institution of proceedings in connection with the National Flag in the courts of the Bombay Presidency, this Government would have the greatest objections. They consider that the national flag movement, in its present form, has little or no political importance and strongly object to being forced into any action which would give encouragement to folly. If the C. P. Government desire to prosecute any Bombay agitators found within their own limits, this Government would have no objection. At the same time they are of opinion that such action at present would tend to bring the disunited party leaders together and this Government would deprecate such action especially on a trivial issue.

Serial no. 6.—Telegram from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Central Provinces, Pachmrahi, no. 1387, dated the 6th June 1923.

Please see your telegram C.1879-II, of 9th, Civil Disobedience Nagpur. As course indicated specially affects Bombay that Government has been consulted. They deprecate any action which would afford a rallying point to a disunited party and involve Government in a contest on tactically unfavourable ground of an issue which in itself is factitious; but which would never the less enlist a considerable amount of popular sympathy. The Bombay Government would not object to prosecution of its agitators in the Central Provinces courts for offences committed in jurisdiction of your Government but they would have strong objections to institution of proceedings in connection with the national flag in courts of the Bombay Presidency.

2. Having regard to the general political situation, the Government of India consider that these views have much to commend them. They appreciate however the difficulties of the local Government and necessities of the local situation. Expedients hitherto resorted to have depended on assumption of limited supply of local volunteers or of recruits from outside province. If experience indicates that this assumption must definitely be abandoned resort to section 120-B., I.P.C., against instigators of movement might be considered. This course would appear to the Government of India on the facts reported to offer certain advantages, though open to objections above indicated, if used with great discretion, in strictly limited number of cases and directed rather to putting organization behind local movement out of action than as general campaign against the Congress policy of civil disobedience. Except in more important cases they would recommend that in use of this section prosecution should press for imposition of substantial sentence of fine only without imprisonment whether substantive or in default followed by systematic and rigorous execution by distraint. Government of India would also suggest advisability of suspension of arrests of members of small groups of demonstrators, and limitation of action to ringleaders or prominent members of larger bodies whose proceedings give more definite ground for apprehending breach of the peace. In these cases also resort to fine and distraint may be found effective. The Government of India recognize that action taken must depend on the developments of the situation from time to time and the local Government may rely on their support in measures taken to maintain law and order and the authority of Government.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial no. 7.—Telegram P. from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. C.-982—2, dated the 19th June 1923.

Four leaders arrested 17th instant; and two hundred and fifty volunteers at Nagpur at dawn 19th; on same day more volunteers were arrested in procession in prohibited area. No disturbance in the least degree. Full report of the situation despatched by letter yesterday.

Serial no. 8.—Letter from A. E. Mathias, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, no. C.-982—II, dated Pachmarhi, the 18th June 1923.

Subject.—Civil disobedience movement in Central Provinces.

I am directed to report the position regarding the Civil Disobedience movement in this province.

2. In my telegram* no. C.-343—II, dated the 11th May 1923, I reported the circumstances under which action was taken by the local officers to prevent the flying of the 'National' flag over the Jubbulpore Town Hall, and the carrying of it in procession through the civil station of Nagpur and the cantonment of Jubbulpore. The subsequent development of the situation was reported in my telegram no. C.-879—II, dated the 9th June 1923. The total number of arrests reported up to the 13th instant was 537 at Nagpur and 15 at Jubbulpore. It was not anticipated that this movement would reach such large dimensions. The number of so-called 'volunteers' enrolled in the local offices of the Congress in this province was small, and it was not thought that others would join the movement or that support would be forthcoming from outside the province. At Nagpur, commencing with parties of eleven volunteers marching in procession to the prohibited area, and sentenced to varying terms of rigorous imprisonment it was soon discovered that this might bring the leaders within the provisions of section 117 of the Indian Penal Code, and consequently the number was reduced to ten. Later it was found that the punishments of rigorous imprisonment under section 143 Indian Penal Code had a deterrent effect on the recruitment of volunteers for this movement, and the number marching in a single procession was reduced to four or less, so that only one month's simple imprisonment might be imposed under section 188 Indian Penal Code. This action of the Magistrates undoubteldy gave great stimulus to the movement. Recruits were obtained in considerable numbers, principally from the districts of Seoni, Balaghat and Betul—backward tracts mainly peopled by aboriginal tribes, who are reported to have been induced to come forward under promises of payment of their conveyance expenses, free food and a bonus of Rs. 50 on their release from jail, or in the alternative Rs. 15 a month for the period of imprisonment. Out of the arrests reported, 168 came from Nagpur, 62 from Seoni, 128 from Balaghat, 91 from Wardha (the home of Jaman Lal Bajaj), and 88 from other districts. By caste 40 are Gonds, 59 Brahmans, 68 Musalmans, 350 other castes, and 20 outcastes. These ignorant Gonds and persons of other inferior castes had no knowledge of the political significance of their actions, but regarded it as a business proposition under which they earned a substantial sum in return for one month's simple imprisonment. Their willingness to accept these terms was stimulated owing to the large amount of unemployment amongst them caused by the Gond boycott of service with the Pawar landlords and cultivators, due to caste disputes, the details of which have been reported separately to the Government of India. The persons recently arrested have been charged under section 120 B, Indian Penal Code, and sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment. It is

* Political File No. 198 of 1923.

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believed that this will have a deterrent effect on local recruitment and also that the start of agricultural operations with the advent of the monsoon will lessen the supply of recruits. Apologies from convicted persons number 34 and have been more numerous since the sentences of rigorous imprisonment.

3. In Jubbulpore the movement has not reached large dimensions, owing to dissensions amongst the local leaders, lack of local enthusiasm, and the opinion of one section of non-co-operators that it is better to concentrate on the Nagpur effort. No attempt has since been made to take the 'National' flag in procession through the cantonment, but isolated attempts have been made by parties of two volunteers to fly it on the Town Hall. The arrests to date have numbered 15, and sentences of rigorous imprisonment have been imposed. The persons convicted include three local leaders, who were found guilty of abetment of unlawful assembly.

4. It has also become manifest that the dispute about the 'National' flag is not the real issue but a pretext for starting a campaign of civil disobedience. It seems clear that had this issue not arisen, another occasion for Civil Disobedience would have been found. On the 23rd March, Bhagwandin a local leader of Nagpur, definitely stated in a public speech that Satyagraha would be commenced on the 1st May in the form of non-payment of taxes. The same leader made it clear at a Nagpur meeting on the 23rd May that if the flag incident of the 13th April had not occurred, eome other ground for civil disobedince would have been found. At the end of April it was announced that a procession carrying the national flag would march on the 1st May and the route of the march was prescribed; the procession was to end at the Sadar Bazar. As arranged the procession started and having reached the Law Courts diverged from the route prescribed by the leaders and attempted to proceed through the main portion of the Civil Station in a direction opposite to the Sadar Bazar. It was pointed out to them by the Deputy Commissioner, who was present on the spot, that they were deliberately departing from their arrangements and the intention can only be to cause ann yance to the residents in the Civil Station. The leader, Jaman Lal Bajaj, after consultation with his supporters, decided not to disobey the order, and continued the procession by the prescribed route to the Sadar Bazar where a meeting was held. At this meeting it was decided that a mistake had been made in publishing the route of the procession beforehand and that in future they would proceed through the Civil Station and cause annoyance to the residents. Appeals were also made for more volunteers. From the 2nd May Satayagraha in its presents form commenced. The intention of the leaders is to prove as against the 'Pro-Council party' the practicability and efficiency of Civil Disobedience. The following quotation from the 'Tarun Maharashtra', a paper which belongs to Jaman Lal Bajaj, indicates this object—"So the minimum intention of this Satyagraha is that the flag procession should pass through the prohibited area. After the achievement of this motive, Satyagraha will not remain quiet without directing its attention towards other injustices because all know that the basic and the chief motice of Satyagraha or civil disobedience is to remove all the difficulties in the way of Swaraj". Recently the Deputy Commissioner received an application from the residents in that portion of the Civil Station which is not covered by the order under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code that the daily processions were causing them great inconvenience and annoyance. Before passing any orders the Deputy Commissioner considered it advisable to give Jaman Lal Bajaj an opportunity of stating his position in regard to the said application and in course of the conversation which followed, Jaman Lal Bajaj stated that, if Government permitted the flag to be carried through the Civil Station, they would then direct their attention and force the same issue against 1st the Government of Bengal and then the Government of Madras.

5. The local Government refrained from taking action against the leaders in the hope that the supply of local recruits would soon be exhausted and because they did not desire to give any encouragement to assistance from other provinces. It is now clear that considerable assistance will be received from other parts of

India. The movement has received the support of the All-India Congress Committee. A party of 75 volunteers arrived in Nagpur from Gugerat on the 13th instant, and other small parties were announced in the press to have started from several other places in the Bombay and Madras presidencies and the United Provinces. It was also known that special arrangements were being made for a large demonstration on the 18th instant (Gandhi day), at which numerous volunteers would offer themselves for arrest including those imported from other provinces. Such was the situation with which the local Government was faced. There seemed to be only two practicable alternatives—the first to withdraw the prohibitory order and allow processionsawith the 'National' flag everywhere, the scond to take more vigorous action gainst the movement. The first course would mean not only great annoyance to the residents of the civil station, but the success of this Civil Disobedience movement, and a second trial of strength in this province or some other province on the same or some alternative issue. The local Government therefore decided on the second alternative of more vigorous action against the movement, particularly the leaders, after giving full weight to the various considerations stated in your telegram of the 16th instant. Instructions were issued to the Nagpur authoritics to arrest the leaders in Nagpur and prosecute them for offences under sections 120-B, 143 read with 107, and 188 of the Indian Penal Code. They were also instructed to arrest all volunteers assembled in Nagpur under section 109 read with section 55 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Instructions were also issued to the District Magistrates of other districts to take similar action against local recruiting agents and parties of volunteers attempting to proceed to Nagpur for Satyagraha. A new order under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code will be issued by the District Magistrate of Nagpur prohibiting processions in the whole of the Civil Station in order to protect from annoyance those residents who as explained in paragraph 4 above, had applied for such protection. The result of this action will be communicated as soon as it is reported. The suggestion for the imposition of fines in preference to imprisonment will be considered, but it could hitherto have been suitably adopted in very few cases, because, the persons convicted have usually no property and no status. It is estimated that jail accommodation can be provided for an additional 1,000, and even more with some temporary arrangements.

Serial no. 9.—Telegram P., from His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated the 26th June 1923

Clear the Line.—Governor and three members of Government have enquired into the situation at Nagpur. There was a partial hartal on the 18th. About ten volunteers have been arrested every day since then. Number ready in Nagpur is estimated at about 100. At trial last batch 111 arrested on 18th, 66 furnished security. These were mainly ignorant villagers recruited from the Balaghat District. Total apologies are 50, but none received from volunteers coming from outside province. In Nagpur recruitment is not large but general opinion is in favour of finding some solution for stopping movement. Yesterday meeting provincial Committee Maharatta Districts, Swaraj Party, although condemning Government action, decided to oppose any support given to movement by Congress because they regard it as organised in opposition to their pro-Council policy. Although not sure of success they hope to persuade the whole of Das party to adopt this attitude. Meetings Khilafat Committee and All-India Congress Committee will be held at Nagpur on the 5th to 8th of July. It appears likely that these Committees will not endorse civil disobedience because they fear that Government will than declare them an unlawful association and will confiscate their funds. But they may support Nagpur movement, on the ground that this is not civil disobedience but Satyagraha, or efforts to enforce right to use public roads carrying national flag, which is not illegal. This would probably stimulate recruitment of local volunteers of a different

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class to the ignorant villagers hitherto recruited and also of volunteers from outside. Rumour indicates substantial number of Marwari volunteers will offer themselves and that Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali may visit Nagpur immediately after release and rouse Muhammadans who have hitherto refrained from participating. It seems impracticable to make any estimate of total number likely to offer themselves for arrest. Jail accommodation can be provided for three thousand additional prisoners, and with temporary jail camp, even larger number. It would greatly help if other local Governments would arrest volunteers before departure. It appears that the present policy of the leaders of the movement is to avoid large concentration volunteers in Nagpur for fear they will be arrested in a body; but to continue to offer small number for arrest daily and continue to struggle for long period. Order under section 144 C. P. C. expires on the 17th August and after that Government would have to rely on section 30 Police Act and sections 120-B, and 188 I. P. C. Proposal likely to mature is that influential body civil station residents, including several Europeans, will make a representation to Government that if leaders of movement will declare national flag is not challenge to Union Jack, there is no intention to cause annoyance, and that steps will be taken to avoid annoyance by orderly conduct procession without large crowd shouting or organised demonstrations, then they request Government to cancel order. If such representation is made local Government proposes to publish it with statement that if these conditions are fulfilled order (will* be) withdrawn. It is believed that (such*) statement might influence Khilafat and Congress Committees' decision and if not accepted might strengthen the position of Government. Acceptance would involve the release of all prisoners. Immediate views of your Government on this question are desired. Failing this solution local Government proposes to continue present policy and (finally determined?) movement by arresting all volunteers—if possible before they reach Nagpur. National flag seems not to be now real issue but organised defiance of Government authority. Issue may not be best grounds on which Government could fight, but surrender without any declaration by leaders of movement would encourage opposition in next fight even on pleaded issue. If desired Governor and Home Member will visit Simla at once to discuss the question. Governor will in any case have to abandon proposed visit to Simla on July 2nd, certainly he must be in Nagpur for (?Simla from) meetings 5th to 8th. Please inform His Excellency the Viceroy.

*By change of 1 figure.

Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Telegram P., No. 528, 29th June 1923. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

In continuation of telegram dated 10th of June 1923, No. 460. The original action taken by the Local Government against demonstrators proceeded on the assumption that the number of so-called volunteers locally available was small and not likely to be recruited by support from outside the province. Recruits were at first obtained from lower castes and aboriginal tribes in the province who were reported to have been induced by promises of payment in considerable numbers. The number of volunteers obtained did not fall off as expected and the total number of arrests reported up to 13th instant was 537. It further became evident that considerable assistance would be obtained in other parts of the country. The Local Government therefore decided that more vigorous action, particularly in regard to the leaders, was essential against the movement. Instructions were issued to the Nagpur authorities to arrest leaders in Nagpur and prosecute them for offences under sections 120-B, 143 read with 107 and 188 of the Indian Penal Code. They were also instructed to arrest under section 109 and section 55 of the Criminal Procedure Code all volunteers assembled in Nagpur. 111 were arrested, of whom 66 furnished security. Instructions were also issued to District Magistrates of other Districts to take similar action against local recruiting agents and parties of volunteers attempting to proceed to Nagpur. The District Magistrate, Nagpur, will issue a new order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting processions in the civil station, the residents of which have applied for such protection from annoyance. The Local Government is of opinion that agricultural operations on the advent of monsoon will greatly reduce recruitment.

The Local Government referred to the Government of India and the latter after consultation with the Bombay Government who were directly concerned owing to the support local movement is receiving from the non-co-operation party in Gujerat and who were averse from any action on issue of national flag advised to following effect. The Congress policy of civil disobedience must be actively combated if and when that main issue is specifically raised, but in view of the actual nature of the local agitation measures taken should be directed primarily to putting organisation behind local movement out of action. They therefore approved resort to section 120-B, Indian Penal Code, against principal instigators of movement. They recognised that action taken must depend on development of situation from time to time and assured the Local Government of their support in measures taken to maintain law and order and the authority of Government.

His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces is proceeding at once to Simla and we shall after personal discussion with him communicate further with you.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 11.—From the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, to Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, Pachmarhi, no. D.-1387, dated the 4th July 1923.

Clear the Line.—Government of India assume they may deny as untrue report in I. N. A. telegram dated 3rd that C. P. Government have proposed round table conference offering to release prisoners and permit procession if Union Jack carried along with National flag.

Serial No. 12.—Telegram P., from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated the 4th July 1923.

Your telegram no. D.-1387 of the 4th July. Report untrue. Government of of India assumption correct.

Serial No. 13.—Question no. 3, dated 11th June 1923.

Colonel Sir Charles Yate.—To ask the Under Secretary of State for India, whether the communication issued by the government of the Central Provinces on the question of the hoisting and carrying in procession of the Swaraj flag was issued with the assent and approval of the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

Answer to Colonel Sir Charles Yate's Question no. 3, dated 11th June 1923.

The communiqué published in the Press of the Central Provinces Government, dated the 5th May, is, as stated therein, an explanation of the Local Government's policy. My Noble Friend has been and is in communication with the Government of India on the whole subject.

Sir C. Yate.—May I ask for an answer to my question; namely, was the communiqué issued with the assent of the Government of India and the Secretary of State?

Earl Winterton.—I would point out that this is a matter within the competence of the local Government. They were entitled to issue an explanation of their action, which they did.

Sir C. Yate.—Has this explanation been followed by an excrudescence of this Swaraj flag flying and an enthusiasm for the flag that did not exist before?

Earl Winterton.—Not so far as I know; not in an illegal sense.

Serial No. 14.—Endorsed by the Government of India, Home Department, no. 1685, dated Simla, the 6th July 1923.

A copy of the undermentioned paper is forwarded to the Government of the C. P. for information.

Q. and A. in Parliament no. 3, dated 11th June 1923.

Serial No. 15.—Telegram P., from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, no. 3087-D.-Poll., dated 18th July 1923.

Government of India would be glad to have appreciation of situation regarding flag agitation with special reference to recent meetings of Congress and Khilafat Committees.

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HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 16.—Telegram X., from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. C.-31, dated the 19th July 1923.

Your telegram no. 3087-D., of 18th July. Full appreciation of present state of affairs been included in fortnightly report for 1st half of July.

Serial No. 17.—From the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, Nagpur, no. D.-1387, dated the 21st August 1923.

Please see your telegram no. C.-31, dated 19th July. Government of India would be glad to be informed as to present situation regarding flag agitation. Kindly send duplicate copy direct Sir Malcolm Hailey C/o W. L. Carey 17 Alipore Park East, Calcutta.

Serial No. 18.—Telegram P., from Secretary of State, to Viceroy (Home Department), no. 3087, dated London, the 21st (received the 22nd) August 1923.

Nagpur flag demonstrations. It is reported in Press telegrams dated 19th and 20th August from Allahabad to "Times" and "Daily Telegraph" that permission was granted to procession through civil station, and brief statements explaining the matter are given. Will you kindly let me have a fulll account of what was done and of reasons for the action of Government.

Serial No. 19.—Telegram P., from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, no. D.-1889, dated the 22nd August 1923.

Continuation Home Department telegram D.-1387, dated 21st August.

Following received from Secretary of State.

Begins No. 3087. Nagpur flag demonstrations. It is reported in Press telegrams dated 19th and 20th August from Allahabad to "Times" and "Daily Telegraph" that permission was granted to procession through civil station, and brief statements explaining the matter are given. Will you kindly let me have a full account of what was done and of reasons for the action of Government. *Ends.*

Please include in your reply answer to Secretary of State's questions.

Serial No. 20.—Telegram from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. 146-A., dated the 23rd August 1923.

Your telegrams of the 21st and 22nd August. Flag agitation. Full information has been sent already by Governor in two demi-official letters addressed to Sir M. Hailey and negotiation for settlement were initiated by the Patel brothers as representatives Congress Committee with the Home Member. They also asked for an interview with Governor which was granted. As a result of the negotiations a settlement was effected. A declaration was issued by working committee that *one* they did not claim the right unrestricted to take processions quietly public roads. *Two* the processions are not intended to annoy any section public. *Three*, There is no intention to insult Union Jack. Further the Patel brothers accepted additional conditions that before any procession was permitted there should be an application to the District Superintendent of Police and that processions would strictly abide by conditions laid down by Government as regards (1) the route did not include the strictly residental portion civil station; (2). The time of the

procession. (3) the limit of numbers ; (4). Orderly conduct with no singing songs or shouting *jai* beyond a fixed point on the route. Further Patel brothers under took that after this single procession a declaration would be made that Satyagraha ceased and that no further processions would be taken into the prohibited area except one which would be taken under exactly similar conditions if and when prisoners were released. These negotiations were carried out under a promise by both sides that they would not be published. The procession took place August 18th when application was made to District Superintendent of Police and the conditions were strictly observed. The same evening Satyagraha was declared to be ended and no attempthas since been made to bring any procession. We intend to release prisoners after a few days when the second procession will be permitted.

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Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Telegram P., No. 694, 25th August 1923. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

Nagpur flag demonstrations. Reference your telegram dated 21st August 1923, No. 3087. It is reported by the Government of the Central Provinces that negotiations for settlement were initiated by Patel Brothers as representative of Congress Committee with Home Member, Central Provinces. They requested interview with Governor which was granted. The following settlement was effected as result of negotiations. Working Committee issued declarations:—

(1) They did not claim the right unrestricted to take processions quietly along public roads; (2) processions were not intended to annoy any section of the public; and (3) there was no intention to insult Union Jack. Further Patel Brothers accepted additional conditions that before any procession was permitted application should be made to the District Superintendent of Police; and that processions would strictly abide by conditions laid down by Government as regards (1) route which did not include the strictly residential portion of civil station; (2) time of procession; (3) limit of numbers; (4) orderly conduct with no singing songs or shouting "jai" beyond a fixed point on route. The Patel Brothers also undertook that after this single procession a declaration would be made that Satyagraha ceased, and that no further processions would be taken into prohibited area except one which would be taken under exactly similar conditions if and when prisoners were released. These negotiations were carried out under a promise on both sides that they would not be published. The procession took place on the 18th instant when an application was made to District Superintendent Police, and conditions were strictly observed. Satyagraha was declared to be ended the same evening and no attempt has been made since to bring any procession. The Local Government intend to release prisoners after a few days when second procession will be permitted.

On receipt of information in regard to one point, which the Central Provinces Government have been asked by clear the line telegram to elucidate, the Government of India's comments will be sent by separate telegram.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 22.—Telegram P., from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, no. D.-2214-Poll., dated Simla, the 25th August 1923.

Clear the Line.—Flag agitation. Reference your telegram no. 146-A., dated the 23rd instant. We should be glad to know whether release of prisoners formed an integral part of the agreement with the representatives of the Congress Committee, and if so what were the precise terms. In particular whether anything was said which might be construed as promise or as indication of future action. If release of prisoners was not part of the agreement any general release should be deferred pending further communication from the Government of India. In any case, Government of India consider that prisoners, if any, convicted of offences involving violence or guilty of serious prison offences should not be released.

Serial No. 23.—Telegram P., from the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. C.-43, dated the 26th August 1923.

Clear the Line.—Flag agitation.

During negotiations Patel brothers pressed for the release of prisoners but were informed that no undertaking could be given and that they must trust in the judgment and good intentions of the Government. Failure to release will be regarded as justifying non-co-operation creed and distrust of British good faith especially as subsequent declaration that Satyagraha had ceased. There has been a discussion between the Home Member and Patel regarding the arrangement for the repatriation of prisoners. Local officers support the release. The retention of prisoners under the security sections when civil disobedience has ceased cannot be justified and the District Magistrate in whose discretion this matter lies is in avour of release. Instructions have been issued deferring the release of the prioners until your further communication is received.

No Satyagraha prisoners have been convicted of crime of violence and local Government has already decided not to release those convicted of prison offences until they have served their sentences under that Act.

The above is with reference to your telegram of the 25th August.

Serial No. 24.—Telegram (Cipher) from the Secretary to the Government of India, to the Government of the Central Provinces, no.D.-2227-Poll., dated the 1st September 1923.

Clear the Line.—No Nagpur Flag agitation. Reference correspondence ending your telegram no. C.-43 of 26th August. Government of India recognise serious embarrassment of situation to local Government, dislocation of normal administration involved and possibility that any indiscretion on part of subordinate officers might at any time have gravely aggravated these difficulties and incidentally they desire to express acknowledgment of tact, and judgment shown by local officers during a period of prolonged strain. Nevertheless, while sympathising in their desire to find a solution for situation Government of India regret that the Government of Central Provinces considered it necessary, as they infer from your telegram to the case, to enter into understanding involving release of prisoners. On this point, in view of our endorsement no. 312 of 9th February 1923 and of effect on general political situation of action proposed, Government of India consider that they should have been previously consulted. They also consider that promise to permit second procession on release of prisoners is liable to much misconstruction and will be claimed by Congress Party as a substantial success. On careful consideration, however, of your telegrams of 23rd and 26th August they recognise that

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they must accept the view of the local Government that any withdrawal or variation at this juncture of terms arranged would be construed as breach of faith and will probably lead to a renewal of agitation on this highly unfavourable issue. They have decided therefore not to advise any modification of the action proposed.

They are, however, of opinion that in order to counteract the misleading reports which have appeared in the press, a full statement of the action taken by the C. P. Government should be published as soon as possible. It has, for instance, been alleged that interview with Patel Brothers took place at instance of His Excellency the Governor and that no application for license for first procession was made. If a written application for a license was made it appears desirable to publish it. It would also be desirable to require written applications for any future procession.

As regards the return of prisoners from other provinces Central Provinces Government might consider expediency of arranging for their transfer to jails in their respective provinces before release with a view to reduce the possibilities of local demonstration. Government of India agree that action in regard to security prisoners must depend on discretion of magistrates in respect of modification of circumstances which originally neceessitated security.

Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Telegram P., No. 710, 1st September 1923. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

Priority. Nagpur Flag incident. The following is in continuation of our telegram of the 25th ultimo. We were, on previous occasion, consulted regarding possibility of withdrawal of prohibitory order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, on receipt of certain assurances and advised (July 3rd) as follows :—

Begins. Assurances which would alone justify course proposed must, in our opinion, bear directly on specific grounds for Government's action hitherto, namely, vindication of law and maintenance of order. There should therefore be specific undertaking that no procession will be taken out without license of authorities and that promoters will, in all respects, comply with regulations laid down for prevention of any infringement of law or any breach of peace or any injury or annoyance to public. It is possible that undertaking in these terms will not be given, but if refused, unlawful intention and disorderly character of movement will be clearly exposed. *Ends.*

In the present instance we were not informed of intention of Local Government to negotiate, though reports to that effect had appeared in press and Local Government did not consult us regarding terms arranged, in some of which we should not have been prepared to concur.

The following communications passed between us and Local Government as regards the release of prisoners :—Telegram from Government of India to Government of Central Provinces, dated the 25th August—

Begins. Reference your telegram No. 146-A., dated 23rd instant. Flag agitation. We should be glad to know whether the release of prisoners formed an integral part of the agreement with the representatives of the Congress Committee, and if so, what were the precise terms. In particular whether anything was said which might be construed as promise or as indication of future action. If release of prisoners was not part of the agreement, any general release should be deferred pending further communication from the Government of India. The Government of India, in any case, consider that prisoners, if any, convicted of offences involving violence or guilty of serious prison offences should not be released. *Ends.*

Telegram from the Government of the Central Provinces to the Government of India, dated the 26th August, No. C.-43—

Begins. Flag agitation. During negotiations the Patel brothers pressed for the release of prisoners, but were informed that no undertaking could be given, and that they must trust in the judgment and good intentions of the

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Government. Failure to release will be regarded as justifying non-co-operation creed and distrust of British good faith, especially in view of subsequent declaration that *Satyagraha* has ceased. There has been a discussion between the Home Member and Patel regarding the arrangements for the repatriation of prisoners. Local officers support the release. The retention of prisoners under the security sections when Civil Disobedience has ceased cannot be justified and the District Magistrate in whose discretion this matter lies is in favour of release. Instructions have been issued deferring the release of the prisoners until your further communication is received. No *Satyagraha* prisoners have been convicted of crime of violence and Local Government has already decided not to release those convicted of prison offences until they have served their sentences under that Act. The above is with reference to your telegram of the 25th August. *Ends.*

We recognise that the situation had become seriously embarrassing to Local Government. It was materially interfering with the normal administration and any indiscretion on the part of a local officer might have gravely aggravated their difficulties. Moreover, they had been placed at some material disadvantage by the legal expiry of the order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code. Nevertheless while sympathising with Local Government in their desire to find solution for situation, we consider that in view of our instructions to all Local Governments in connection with release of prisoners in the United Provinces (*vide* correspondence ending with our telegram to you, dated 9th February 1923), we should have been consulted on this point before understanding involving release was arrived at. We are also of opinion that understanding regarding second procession on release of prisoners was inopportune and liable to serious misconstruction. But we must accept the view of Local Government that failure to act on stipulations agreed to by them would involve them in charge of breach of faith and probably lead to recrudescence of agitation on this issue which would be highly unfavourable to them. We therefore have arrived at conclusion that we cannot interfere at this stage. The Local Government has been advised by us that prisoners convicted of offences involving violence or serious prison offences should not be released. We would add that release of prisoners imprisoned in default of security is in different category from those sentenced for specific offences for their further detention could not be justified if conditions rendering security necessary no longer exist.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 26.—Telegram P., from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, no. *Nil*, dated Saugor Cantonment, the 6th September 1923.

On the 3rd September the civil disobedience prisoners were released. There were no demonstrations of importance and no second flag processions through prohibited areas.

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Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Tel. P., No. 732, 8th September 1923. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

Nagpur Flag. Continuation my telegram of the 1st instant. Prisoners were released on the 3rd September. There were no demonstrations of importance and no second processions through prohibited areas.

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 28.—From A. E. Mathias, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to Government, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, no. 1278-1287-II, dated Nagpur, the 12th September 1923.

Subject :—'Flag' agitation at Nagpur.

I am directed to forward for the information of the Government of India a copy of the Political Department Resolution no. 1262-1057-II, dated the 8th September 1923, on the subject of the 'Flag' agitation at Nagpur.

Resolution from A. E. Mathias, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government of the Central Provinces, no. 1262-1057-II, dated Nagpur, the 8th September 1923.

As the Nagpur flag agitation has now ceased, the Government of the Central Provinces considers it desirable to place on record a connected account of the principal events of the last four months and of the action by the Government to maintain order and vindicate respect for the law.

2. A true understanding of this mischievous movement can be gained by contrasting the irresponsible violence of its opening stages with the disavowals published by the leaders at its close. As already announced in this Government's communiqué of the 28th June, the first aggressive move was made by Bhagwandin, one of the most prominent agitators of the province, when, in a speech delivered on March 23rd, he threatened that a campaign of civil disobedience would be begin in Nagpur in May. Thereafter on the 13th April the attack was taken up by another local leader, Awari, who, in a speech of unusual violence declared that two lacs of Englishmen must be expelled, and the Government of the Congress established by Satyagraha. He concluded by publicly stating his intention of leading a thousand men into the Civil Station, and the next day marched to the Civil Station at the head of a large and disorderly crowed headed by volunteers carrying national flags and shouting provocative cries. The Local Authorities were thus forced to take action for the maintenance of order, and the procession was therefore stopped by the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police in person under the authority of section 30 (*i*) of the Police Act. Awari, however, insisted on pursuing his disorderly course further into the Civil Station asserting that he could accept no orders but those of his own Government, the Congress. Under the circumstances the Local Authorities decided to prohibit the procession and arrest its leaders.

3. Up to this point but little had been said or heard in Nagpur of the national flag, and, even if Awari's crowd had not carried these flags, the processions would have been dealt with in exactly the same way. From this date, however, the local leaders sought to justify lawless and disorderly conduct under the pretext of asserting the dignity of the national flag. Even after the events of the 14th April and the provocative speeches of the non-co-operators which followed, the Local Authorities made no attempt to interfere with a procession with the flag through that portion of the Civil Station where the public were accustomed in the ordinary course to proceed on business. No objection was accordingly taken to the published route announced by Seth Jamanlal Bajaj for the second procession on the 1st May. It was only when the procession branched off into the purely residential area that the District Magistrate stopped it by the issue of an order under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting processions without his permission within that area on the grounds that such processions were likely to cause annoyance to the residents and lead to a disturbance of the public tranquility. This procession under Seth Jamanlal on the 1st May was induced by the District Magistrate to turn back and proceed along its advertised route, but though the order was obeyed on this day it was deliberately disobeyed on the next, the 2nd May, when a third procession returned and crossed the line into the prohibited area. Thereafter day after day

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parties of varying numbers have sought to enter the prohibited area with the object of breaking the District Magistrate's order, and forcing their own arrest. The local Government then published a communiqué which stated explicitly that it would not interfere with the use of the Swarajya flag except when it constituted an offence under the Criminal law. As these events have shown, the District Magistrate's order under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code was aimed, not against the exercise of any legitimate public right, but against the misuse of the national flag in order to justify the repeated disorder and defiance of the law which ensued daily for the next 3½ months.

4. Numerous volunteers of all ages and castes were brought to Nagpur for the purpose of defyng the District Magistrate's order, and when the local and provincial sources of recruitment began to fail, further volunteers were enlisted from the other provinces of India, chiefly Bombay and Madras. The leaders maintained their defiant attitude unchanged until the end of June, and asserted that Satyagraha was justified by " the denial of the elementary right to exhibit the flag, and carry it in peaceful and orderly procession on public roads ". No such right ever has been or will be challenged by the Government, and this charge is refuted definitively by the communiqué of the 1st May. Further the sinister origin of these disturbances is suppressed, and the disorder and civil disobedience organised and sustained by Awari, Jamanlal, Bhagwandin and others are transmitted into the harmless right to carry a flag in peaceful procession.

5. After the arrest of Jamanlal on the 18th June, representatives of the Working Committee of the Congress took charge of the movement, and disavowals were made of any intention to insult the Union Jack or to cause annoyance to the European residents. Negotiations for a settlement of this agitation were initiated with the Home Member of the Government by Mr. V. J. Patel before the meeting of the Legislative Council at the beginning of August. The position of the Government was explained by His Excellency the Governor in his address to the Legislative Council on the 6th August. He pointed out that the order of the District Magistrate had not prohibited all processions but only processions without his permission; and further declared that the unrestricted right to the use of the public roads without regulation is not permitted in any civilised country. He stated that the local Government regarded the agitation as Civil Disobedience and an attempt to overcome the authority of Government, and that this challenge to lawful authority would be resisted.

On August the 13th His Excellency the Governor granted an interview to Mr. V. J. and Mr. V. B. Patel, under circumstances which have already been made known in the Chief Secretary's communiqué of the 1st September, in which it was denied that the interview took place at the express invitation of His Excellency the Governor. After subsequent interviews with the Home Member, the Government communicated to Mr. Patel the conditions under which a procession would be permitted within the prohibited are upon application to the Local Authorities. On the 16th August, Mr. V. B. Patel issued a statement, as the authorised representative of the Working Committee of the Congress, that they did not claim the unrestricted right to take processions along the public roads, that the processions were not intended to annoy any section of the public, and that the National Flag was not carried with any intention to insult the Union Jack. The order passed by the District Magistrate of Nagpur prohibiting all processions without his permission within a certain area expired on the 16th August. On the 17th August an order under Section 30(*i*) of the Police Act was promulgated by the District Superintendent of Police, Nagpur, prescribing the routes for processions in the city of Naghpur. No processon could therefore pass through the prohibited area covered previously by the District Magistrate's order without the special rders of the District Superintendent of Police. On the morning of the 18th August the following application was made to

the District Superintendent of Police :—

To

The District Superintendent of Police,

Nagpur.

Sir,

I hereby intimate to you that I propose to organise and take a procession through the city and the Civil lines to-day, the 18th August 1923, at the time, by the routes, and in the manner mentioned in the published notice a copy of which is herewith enclosed for your information.

Yours truly,

VALLABHAI J. PATEL.

The time, the route, and the manner referred to were the same as those laid down by Government. The route prescribed did not include the strictly residential portion of the Civil Station, the numbers were limited to one hundred, and orderly conduct was required, with no singing of songs or shouting of *jais* beyond the point fixed. This procession was held accordinly, and the conditions duly observed, and thereafter the leaders declared that Satyagraha had ceased. No procession has entered the prohibited area since that date.

6. Having satisfied itself that the agitation had ceased, and having been given an undertaking that the prisoners would not ake any further part in the Nagpur Flag agitation contrary to the co nditions under which the procession of the 18th August was permitted, the local Government as an act of clemency decided to release the prisoners, except those convicted of offences against the Prisons Act. Most of them are misguided youths with no real knowledge of the movement ; and with the cessation of the agitation it was considered that there was no necessity for retaining in prison those who failed to execute bonds under the Security sections of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Throughout this agitation the policy of the Government has remained unchanged. The Governor in Council has insisted on the maintenance of two principles—the first is submission to lawful authority, and the second that no procession can be permitted within the prohibited area without application to the local authorities and due observance of the conditions imposed. Both the above points were satisfied before the procession of the 18th August was allowed. The future policy of the Government will follow the same lines, and any procession such as is calculated to cause annoyance to any section of the public or is disorderly in character will be prohibited.

8. Finally the Governor in Council desires to express his high appreciation of the admirable conduct of all officials upon whom has rested during this trying period the burden of heavy and responsible additional duties. Under the good guidance of the Commissioner, Mr. Clarke, a high standard of duty has been maintained by all ranks. Mr. Clarke was also entrusted by Government with the publicity arrangements connected with the agitation. To the District Magistrate, Mr. H. C. Gowan, I.C.S., the thanks of Government are due for his efficient control, with unfailing patience and sound judgment, of the agitation from its beginning to its close. The Government also desires to acknowledge the good work of the magistrates and the promptitude with which they disposed of their heavy criminal cases. To the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. D. A. Smyth, the City Superintendent, Mr. Sant Singh, and to all ranks of the force under their control, special acknowledgment is due for the excellent arrangements and uniform consideration and good temper with which they have met every call on their energies and self-control. Lastly the local Government desires to acknowledge the good services of the Jail Superintendent Captain N. S. Jater, D.S.O., I.M.S., and his staff, under trying conditions of exceptional difficulty.

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HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 29.—From G. H. W. Davies, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to Sir William Duke, G. C.I.E., K.C.S.I., His Majesty's Under Secretary of State for India, no. 128, dated Simla, the 20th September 1923.

In continuation of the Viceroy's telegram no. 710, dated the 1st September 1923, I am directed to forward for the information of the Secretary of State a copy of Resolution no. 1262-1057-II, dated the 8th September 1923, issued by the Government of the Central Provinces regarding the flag agitation at Nagpur.

Serial No. 30.—Telegram P., from Secretary of State to Viceroy (Home Department), no. 3413, dated the London, the 20th (received the 21st) September 1923.

Reference your telegram of the 1st instant. Nagpur flag incident. Please call for a full report on the whole matter. I should be glad to receive this as soon as possible by mail, with comments of Your Excellency's Government. At present it is not clear whether, when the negotiations were opened, the previous action of the local Government had not already practically defeated the agitation and whether the decision to allow procession even on special conditions is not likely to be generally regarded as a triumph for the flag movement.

I desire, on the my present information , to say that while I recognise the difficulties of local situation, I think that the Local Government should have consulted the Government of India before entering oupon negotiations for it must have been obvious that their action would have repercussion far beyond their own provinces. While I am disposed to share the view of Your Excellency's Government on the two points of the second procession which I learn from your telegram of September 8th did not actually take place and release of prisoners these decisions seem to have emerged almost inevitably from negotiations. Obviously permission to hold a procession to celebrate release of prisoners convicted for trying to hold a similar procession was open to construction that Goverooment admitted earlier policy to have been wrong. The essential point however is whether the Local Government was justified in modifying its original attitude which it had very recently justified in the Legislative Council debate.

The Local Government should be informed it is very inconvenient that news of such action should reach the Government of India and myself through the newspapers. It is merely due to accident that Parliament had risen that matter did not immediately lead to very embarrassing criticism here.

I am in the meanwhile deferring reply to your despatch No. 3, dated May 31st but I take this opportunity of saying that resentment expressed by Your Excellency's Government is due to misinterpretation of my suggestion that instructions to District Officers ought to be precise enough exclusive of the possibility of their supposing that they had encouragement of Government for individual action of a kind which the local Governments could not or would not support.

Serial No. 31.—Telegram from the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, to the Government of the Central Provinces, Pachmarhi, no. D.-2476-Poll., dated the 24th September 1923.

Secretary of State desires to have by mail full and connected report Nagpur Flag incident. Following are points on which in light of Secretary of State's provisional comments it is desirable that statement contained in Centarl Provinces Government's Resolution no. 2162-1057-II, dated the 8th September should in particular be supplemented.

(*i*) whether when nogotiations were opened previous action of local Government had not already practically defeated agitation ;

(*ii*) Grounds of local Government for entering on negotiations which must have repercussion beyond their own provinces without consultation of Governmnt of India ;

(*iii*) whether decision to allow even on special conditions processions is not likely to be generally regraded as triumph for flag movement, and in particular whether permission to hold procession to celebrate release of prisoners convicted in connection with similar procession was not open to construction that Government admitted earlier policy to be wrong ;

(*iv*) grounds of local Government for modifying their original attitude recently justified in Legislative Council.

2. Secretary of State desires Central Provinces Government's attention to be drawn to inconvenience arising from news of such action reaching Government of India and himself through newspapers.

3. Please send report with least possible delay.

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No. 163-I., dated Nagpur, the 1st October 1923.

From—A. E. MATHIAS, Esq., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, Political and Military Department,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram no. D.-2476-Poll., dated the 24th September, in which it is stated that the Secretary of State desires a full and connected report of the 'National' flag agitation at Nagpur. Such a report has already been issued in this Government's Resolution no. 1262, dated the 8th September, but I am directed to supplement it by the following further information, with special reference to the particular points raised by the Secretary of State's comments.

2. It appears desirable to preface this supplementary report by a statement of the legal position in regard to the flying of the 'National' flag and the extent to which the local Government's power of preventing the carrying of this flag in procession is restricted by definite provisions of law. As pointed out in Mr. O'Donnell's letter no. D. 7341, dated the 17th August 1922, the flying of this flag is not in itself an offence under the law and cannot therefore be prohibited generally or made the basis of a prosecution. The local Government has been advised that the only legal provisions under which action can be taken to prevent the taking of this flag in procession are Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, and Section 30 of the Police Act. Under the former provision a Magistrate, authorised to take action under this section, may when he considers immediate prevention desirable, prohibit the taking of this flag in procession only if such prohibition is likely to prevent annoyance to any person lawfully employed or a disturbance of the public tranquillity or a riot or an affray. Such an order cannot remain in force for more than two months except by direction of the local Government, and such direction can only be given when there is danger to human life, health or safety, or a likelihood of a riot or an affray.

Under Section 30 (1) of the Police Act, the District Superintendent of Police may as occasion requires direct the conduct of processions on public roads and prescribe the routes by which such processions shall pass; and under Section 30 (2) of the Act he can only require a license to be taken out for the procession if, in the opinion of the Magistrate, there is danger of a breach of the peace. Under this section the action of the District Superintendent of Police must be taken either in the interest of traffic control and the general covenience of the public, or to prevent a breach of the peace.

3. The agitation in connection with the 'National' flag commenced at Jubbulpore when the flying of this flag on the Town Hall was prohibited by the District Magistrate under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, on the ground that he had received a petition from some 500 residents objecting to such action and that the flying of the flag on the Town Hall would cause annoyance to such persons. A procession carrying the flag was similarly prevented under Section 30 Police Act from entering the Jubbulpore Cantonment area on March the 18th, because it was considered likely to cause annoyance and a breach of the public tranquillity. Thereafter the scene of operations was shifted to Nagpur, the local extremist party deliberately choosing this town in preference to Jubbulpore as more suited to their purpose. With the exception of two or three attempts to fly the flag on the Town Hall, in the course of which fifteen persons were sentenced to periods of imprisonment, there was no further trouble at Jubbulpore.

4. The salient features of the Nagpur agitation have already been given in the Resolution referred to above. The agitation never received any considerable local support in Nagpur; it failed to appeal to the uneducated, while the more responsible political leaders regarded it from the outset as entirely unjustified; the Swaraj party of the Congress, which had advised entry into the Legislative Councils on the ground that civil disobedience was impracticable and inadvisable, considered the agitation an astute political move directed against themselves. This party, which in this province is strong, threw its influence against the agitation. By the middle of May the supply of local volunteers from Nagpur for this form of

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civil disobedience was practically exhausted. Recognizing that further spontaneous support was not forthcoming, the leaders of the movement then turned their attention to the other districts of the province, and by means of false promises, misrepresentation and money payment, induced volunteers from these districts, largely consisting of ignorant and illiterate persons of aboriginal and inferior castes, to come to Nagpur in substantial numbers for the purpose of disobeying the District Magistrate's order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, and thus courting arrest.

5. By the commencement of June it became apparent that special measures would be needed to counter this new development. After consulting the Government of India, it was decided to arrest the local leaders of the movement for trial under Section 120-B., Indian Penal Code. It was decided at the same time that persons who arrived in Nagpur, with the obvious intention of committing an offence by disobeying the District Magistrate's order, should be arrested under Section 55, Criminal Procedure Code, and called on to give security as not being able to give a satisfactory account of themselves under Section 109, Criminal Procedure Code. Accordingly on the 17th and 18th June four, leaders *viz.*, Jamanlal Bajaj, Ibid Ali, Nilkantrao Deshmukh and Bhagwandin were arrested; a general round up of volunteers imported into Nagpur for a special display of civil disobedience on Gandhi day, was carried out early on the 18th June, and 250 arrests were made. On the application of certain residents of the main road along which the processions passed in order to reach the prohibited area, representing that the constant processions caused them serious annoyance, a fresh order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, was issued extending the prohibited area. Instructions were also issued to Deputy Commissioners to prevent the recruitment in their districts of 'volunteers' for the Nagpur agitation, by the prosecution of persons attempting to recruit or to incite others to offer disobedience at Nagpur to the District Magistrate's order. These measures were effective in disorganizing the movement for a time, and the supply of 'volunteers' was with difficulty maintained.

6. Efforts however were made to import 'volunteers' from other provinces, to secure the formal approval of the Congress, and to get that body to take up the flag movement as an 'All-India' matter. These efforrts met with success, and on the 6th June the Congress Committee sitting at Nagpur gave its approval to the agitation, instructed other provinces to assist, and directed its working committee to devise ways and means to assist the agitation. Mr. V. B. Patel was entrusted with the general management of the movement on behalf of the Congress Committee. The importance of the Resolution of the Congress Committee was lessened by the fact that the Swaraj party abstained from voting, while the 'All-India' flag day arranged for the 18th July was not much of a success. At the same time it must be recognized that the resolution of the Congress Committee meant the financial support of the Congress, and in fact Rs. 50,000 were voted to assist the movement. In India it is always possible to obtain volunteers on payment, and the Congress had funds at its disposal sufficient to continue the agitation for an indefinite period. The effect of Congress financial support was at once apparent in the increase in the number of arrests. At the beginning of July arrests averaged from 6 to 8 a day; on the 9th July it increased to 15; between 1st August and 16th August the daily average of arrests was 19. It was the declared policy of the leaders to continue the agitation for a long period by offering for daily arrest small parties of volunteers. The local Government was not in a position to estimate the number of volunteers likely to be recruited from other provinces. Mr. Patel's public statement estimated the number at ten to twelve thousand. Newspapers gave accounts of the organization of parties at various centres, and in particular of women volunteers, with whom it would have been difficult to deal. It therefore seemed probable that the agitation might be continued over a long period, and the local Government had also to take into account the fact that the amendments of the Criminal Procedure Code would shortly came into force, under which it would be possible to award simple imprisonment only for failure to give security in proceedings taken under Section 109, Criminal Procedure Code. But the fact that the agitation might be continued for a substantial period, together with some weakening of the legal position, did not influence the policy of the local Government.

7. A material fact not mentioned in the Government Resolution is that on the 26th July the District Magistrate was approached to allow a procession carrying national flags through a portion of the prohibited area in celebration of the Turkish Peace Treaty ; guarantees were given that no annoyance would be caused and that the procession would not pass through the residential portion proper. The application was on behalf of certain Mahomedans and not on behalf of the Congress. Permission was given and the procession proceeded without incident.

8. Negotiations for a settlement of this agitation were initiated with the Home Member of the Government by Mr. V. J. Patel before the meeting of the Legislative Council at the beginning of August. The position of the Government was explained by His Excellency the Governor in his address to the Legislative Council on the 6th August. He pointed out that the order of the District Magistrate had not prohibited all processions but only processsions without his permission ; and further declared that the unrestricted right to the use of the public roads without regulation is not permitted in any civilised country. He stated that the local Government regarded the agitation as Civil Disobedience and an atempt to overcome the authority of Government, and that this challenge to lawful authority would be resisted.

Two resolutions were moved in the Legislative Council (1) that the order of the District Magistrate under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, should be withdrawn and (2) that all prisoners convicted in connection with the flag agitation should be released. Both these resolutions were carried by a small majority against the Government. The main arguments advanced by the supporters of these resolutions were that the action of the Government was not justified in the interests of a small body of European residents of the Civil Station, and that the convictions were obtained by an illegal straining of the provisions of the law. These arguments reflected a large body of Indian opinion in the province even amongst the responsible moderate section.

9. As regards the negotiations with Mr. Patel I am to state that the Government did not enter on such negotiations. It was approached by Mr. V. J. Patel and Mr. V. B. Patel, representatives of the Congress Committee, with a view to ascertaining the conditions in which Government would allow a procession through the prohibited area, and the Government considered that it should not refuse to explain its position to anyone desiring to ascertain it. During the course of the negotiations with the Home Member of the Government, His Excellency the Governor granted an interview to Mr. V. J. and Mr. V. B. Patel on the 13th August, under circumstances which have already been made known in the Chief Secretary's Communiqué of the 1st September, in which it was denied that the interview took place at the express invitation of His Excellency the Governor. After subsequent interviews with the Home Member, the Government communicated to Mr. Patel the conditions under which a procession would be permitted within the prohibited area upon application to the local authorities. These conditions were settled with the concurrence of the local authorities. Moreover, Mr. Patel gave an undertaking that if this procession was permitted Satyagraha would cease ; and that if the prisoners were released they would also abstain from further participation in processions without permission. A further result of these negotiations was that on the 15th August Mr. V. B. Patel issued a statement, as the authorized representative of the Working Committee of the Congress, that they did not claim the unrestricted right to take processions along the public roads, that the processions were not intended to annoy any section of the public, and that the national flag was not carried with any intention to insult the Union Jack. It was considered that this statement materially altered the position.

On the evening of the 17th August the order of the District Magistrate under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, expired and as there was no danger of a breach of the peace, it could not be renewed. The same day the District Superintendent of Police issued an order under Section 30 Police Act specifying the roads in the Nagpur Civil Station along which no processions could pass without his permission ; the roads specified were those running through the residential portion of the Civil Station. On the morning of the 18th August an application was made by Mr. Patel to the District Superintendent of Police, which has already been

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published in the Government Resolution, stating the conditions on which he proposed to lead a procession through a portion of the prohibited area. The time, the route and the manner referred to were the same as those laid down by Government. The route prescribed did not include the strictly residential portion of the Civil Station, the numbers were limited to one hundred and orderly conduct was required, with no singing of songs or shouting of *jais* beyond the point fixed. This procession was held accordingly, the conditions were duly observed and thereafter the leaders declared that Satyagraha had ceased. No procession has entered the prohibited area since that date.

10. The legal position was as follows :—

(*a*) The order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, expired on the 18th August and could not be renewed as there was no likelihood of a breach of the peace.

(*b*) The order of the District Magistrate was not absolute but conditional, requiring his previous permission before any particular procession entered the prohibited area.

(*c*) Once the local authorities were satisfied that there was no risk of a breach of the peace, or of annoyance to any persons lawfully employed, they were legally bound to grant permission.

The sole point for decision by the District Magistrate was whether a procession, proceeding by the route and under the conditions proposed, would cause a risk of annoyance to the residents in the Nagpur Civil Station or of a breach of the peace—a matter which can only be decided by the local authorities. This Government is advised that once it is established that there is no risk of annoyance or of a breach of the peace, there is no legal method by which the District Magistrate or the local Government can prohibit a procession entering the Nagpur Civil Station even if it carries the " National ' flag.

11. The local Government did not consult the Government of India before allowing this procession, because they did not consider that this decision involved any change of the policy followed after consultation with the Government of India, and because the local authorities were alone in a position to judge the local facts upon which the legal position depended. But I am to express the regret of the local Government that in coming to a decision which involved the release of the prisoners, they overlooked the instructions forwarded with your endorsement no. D.-12, dated the 9th February 1923

12. The third point is whether the decision to allow a procession even on special conditions is not likely to be generally regarded as a triumph for the flag movement and in particular whether permission to hold a procession to celebrate the release of prisoners convicted in connection with similar processions was not open to the construction that Government admitted the earlier policy to be wrong. In regard to this I am to say that the view that the flag movement has been successful is mainly confined to the extreme section of the Congress, who have grossly misrepresented the facts under which the procession was permitted. The Anglo-Indian press, with one or two exceptions, support the local Government's action (see the leading articles in the *Statesman* of the 12th September and of the *Times of India* of September 10th). The Moderate press considers that the local Government has successfully vindicated its authority. The Swaraj press bitterly attacks the civil disobedience party and considers that Mr. Patel has surrendered abjectly to Government. I am to enclose press cuttings in support of the above statements. After the release of prisoners, the demonstrations in this province were unimportant and generally small. The local Government considers that permission to hold a second procession on the release of the prisoners, on the same conditions as were imposed on the first procession, could not logically nor legally be refused, since there would have been no risk of a breach of the peace or of annoyance to residents. In point of fact permission for a second procession was not sought nor was such a procession held. The local Government understands that on reflection Mr. V. B. Patel decided not take out the second procession because a repetition of the first

'funeral' procession would have disclosed the defeat of the flag movement and would have made patent to all that the procession was allowed only under the conditions imposed by the Government, a fact which he has denied but which is admitted in Mr. V. J. Patel's published statement of the 10th September.

13. The fourth point is on what grounds the local Government modified their original attitude recently justified in the Legislative Council. I am to submit that there has been no such modification. The attitude of Government as explained in the Legislative Council was as follows :

1. The District Magistrate's order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, was passed because there was a risk of annoyance to residents in the Civil Station if a procession carrying 'National' flags, shouting provocative cries, and of a disorderly character, was allowed, to proceed through the residential portion.
2. The District Magistrate's order was conditional only, and it was open to any one to obtain permission to take a procession through the Civil Station on satisfying the District Magistrate that no annoyance would be caused.
3. The Government could not allow its right to regulate the use of the public roads to be challenged.

The reason why a procession was permitted through the prohibited area was not because Government changed its attitude, but because these requirements of Government were met as follows—

1. On the 15th August Mr. Patel, on behalf of the Congress, issued an authoritative statement that the 'National' flag was in no way a challenge to the Union Jack, that there was no intention to annoy any section of the public, and that the right of Government to regulate the use of the public roads was recognized,
2. The procession was allowed only with the permission of the local authorities, and the conditions regulating it were prescribed by the local authorities and observed.

14. Finally I am to forward copies of the more important documents referred to in this report.

ENCLOSURE.

1. Resolution, no. 1262-1057-II., dated the 8th September 1923.
2. Communiqué, dated the 1st May 1923.
3. Order of District Magistrate under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, dated the 1st May 1923.
4. Communiqué, dated the 28th June 1923.
5. Communiqué, dated the 1st September 1923.
6. Statement by Mr. V. J. Patel, dated the 10th September 1923.
7. Press Extracts.

ENCLOSURE NO. 1.

No. 1262-1057-II., dated Nagpur, the 8th September 1923.

Resolution by the Government of the Central Provinces, Political and Military Department.

As the Nagpur flag agitation has now ceased, the Government of the Central Provinces considers it desirable to place on record a connected account of the principal events of the last four months and of the action by the Government to maintain order and vindicate respect for the law.

2. A true understanding of this mischievous movement can be gained by contrasting the irresponsible violence of its opening stages with the disavowals published by the leaders at its close. As already announced in this Government's *Communiqué* of the 28th June, the first aggressive move was made by Bhagwandin, one of the most prominent agitators of the province, when, in a speech delivered on March 23rd, he threatened that a compaign of Civil Disobedience would be begun in Nagpur in May. Thereafter on the 13th April the attack was taken up by another

local leader, Awari, in a speech of unusual violence, declared that two lakhs of Englishmen must be expelled, and the Government of the Congress established by Satyagraha. He concluded by publicly stating his intention of leading men into the Civil Station, and the next day marched to the Civil Station at the head of a large and disorderly crowd headed by volunteers carrying national flags and shouting provocative cries. The local authorities were thus forced to take action for the maintenance of order, and the procession was therefore stopped by the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police in person under the authority of Section 30 (i) of the Police Act. Awari, however, insisted on pursuing his disorderly course further into the Civil Station, asserting that he could accept no orders but those of his own Government, the Congress. Under the circumstances the local authorities decided to prohibit the procession and arrest its leaders.

3. Up to this point but little had been said or heard in Nagpur of the national flag and, even if Awari's crowd had not carried these flags, the processions would have been dealt with in exactly the same way. From this date, however, the local leaders sought to justify lawless and disorderly conduct under the pretext of asserting the dignity of the national flag. Even after the events of the 14th April and the provocative speeches of the non-co-operators which followed, the local authorities made no attempt to interfere with a procession with the flag through that portion of the Civil Station where the public were accustomed in the ordinary course to proceed on business. No objection was accordingly taken to the published route announced by Seth Jamanlal Bajaj for the second procession on the 1st May. It was only when the procession branched off into the purely residential area that the District Magistrate stopped it by the issue of an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting processions without his permission within that area on the grounds that such processions were likely to cause annoyance to the residents and lead to a disturbance of the public tranquillity. This procession under Seth Jamanlal on the 1st May was induced by the District Magistrate to turn back and proceed along its advertised route, but though the order was obeyed on this day it was deliberately disobeyed on the next, the 2nd May, when a third procession returned and crossed the line into the prohibited area. Thereafter day after day parties of varying numbers have sought to enter the prohibited area with the object of breaking the District Magistrate's order, and forcing their own arrest. The local Government then published a *Communiqué* which stated explicitly that it would not interfere with the use of the Swarajya flag except when it constituted an offence under the Criminal law. As these events have shown, the District Magistrate's order under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code was aimed, not against the exercise of any legitimate public right, but against the misuse of the national flag in order to justify the repeated disorder and defiance of the law which ensued daily for the next 3½ months.

4. Numerous volunteers of all ages and castes were brought to Nagpur for the purpose of defying the District Magistrate's order, and when the local and provincial sources of recruitment began to fail, further volunteers were enlisted from the other provinces of India, chiefly Bombay and Madras. The leaders maintained their defiant attitude unchanged until the end of June, and asserted that Satyagraha was justified by " the denial of the elementary right to exhibit the flag, and carry it in peaceful and orderly procession on public roads." No such right ever has been or will be challenged by the Government, and this charge is refuted definitively by the *Communiqué* of the 1st May. Further the sinister origin of these disturbances is suppressed, and the disorder and civil disobedience organised and sustained by Awari, Jamanlal, Bhagwandin and others are transmuted into the harmless right to carry a flag in peaceful procession.

5. After the arrest of Jamanlal on the 18th June, representatives of the Working Committee of the Congress took charge of the movement, and disavowals were made of any intention to insult the Union Jack or to cause annoyance to the European residents. Negotiations for a settlement of this agitation were initiated with the Home Member of the Government by Mr. V. J. Patel before the meeting of the Legislative Council at the beginning of August. The position of the Government was explained by His Excellency the Governor in his address to the Legislative Council on the 6th August. He pointed out that the order of the District Magistrate had not prohibited all processions but only processions without his permission ; and further declared that the unrestricted right to the use of the

public roads without regulation is not permitted in any civilised country. He stated that the local Government regarded the agitation as Civil Disobedience and an attempt to overcome the authority of Government, and that this challenge to lawful authority would be resisted.

On August the 13th His Excellency the Governor granted an interview to Mr. V. J. and Mr. V. B. Patel under circumstances which have already been made known in the Chief Secretary's *Communiqué* of the 1st September, in which it was denied that the interview took place at the express invitation of His Excellency the Governor. After subsequent interviews with the Home Member, the Government communicated to Mr. Patel the conditions under which a procession would be permitted within the prohibited area upon application to the local authorities. On the 16th August, Mr. V. B. Patel issued a statement, as the authorised representative of the Working Committee of the Congress, that they did not claim the unrestricted right to take processions along the public roads, that the processions were not intended to annoy any section of the public, and that the national flag was not carried with any intention to insult the Union Jack. The order passed by the District Magistrate of Nagpur prohibiting all processions without his permission within a certain area expired on the 16th August. On the 17th August an order under Section 30 (i) of the Police Act was promulgated by the District Superintendent of Police, Nagpur, prescribing the routes for processions in the city of Nagpur. No procession could therefore pass through the prohibited area covered previously by the District Magistrate's order without the special orders of the District Superintendent of Police. On the morning of the 18th August the following application was made to the District Superintendent of Police :—

To

The District Superintendent of Police,

Nagpur.

Sir,

I hereby intimate to you that I propose to organise and take a procession through the City and the Civil lines to-day, the 18th August 1923, at the time, by the routes, and in the manner mentioned in the published notice, a copy of which is herewith enclosed for your information.

Yours truly,

Vallabhai J. Patel.

The time, the route, and the manner referred to were the same as by Government. The route prescribed did not include the strictly residential portion of the Civil Station, the numbers were limited to one hundred, and orderly conduct was required, with no singing of songs or shouting of *jais* beyond the point fixed. This procession was held accordingly, and the conditions duly observed, and thereafter the leaders declared that Satyagraha had ceased. No procession has entered the prohibited area since that date.

6. Having satisfied itself that the agitation had ceased, and having been given an undertaking that the prisoners would not take any further part in the Nagpur flag agitation contrary to the conditions under which the procession of the 18th August was permitted, the local Government as an act of clemency decided to release the prisoners, except those convicted of offences against the Prisons Act. Most of them are misguided youths with no real knowledge of the movement; and with the cessation of the agitation it was considered that there was no necessity for retaining in prison those who failed to execute bonds under the Security sections of the Criminal Procedure Code.

7. Throughout this agitation the policy of the Government has remained unchanged. The Governor in Council has insisted on the maintenance of two principles—the first is submission to lawful authority, and the second that no procession can be permitted within the prohibited area without application to the local authorities and due observance of the conditions imposed. Both the above points were satisfied before the procession of the 18th August was allowed. The future

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policy of the Government will follow the same lines, and any procession such as is calculated to cause annoyance to any section of the public or is disorderly in character will be prohibited.

8. Finally, the Governor in Council desires to express his high appreciation of the admirable conduct of all officials upon whom has rested during this trying period the burden of heavy and responsible additional duties. Under the good guidance of the Commissioner, Mr. Clarke, a high standard of duty has been maintained by all ranks. Mr. Clarke was also entrusted by Government with the publicity arrangements connected with the agitation. To the District Magistrate, Mr. H. C. Gowan, I.C.S., the thanks of Government are due for his efficient control, with unfailing patience and sound judgment, of the agitation from its beginning to its close. The Government also desires to acknowledge the good work of the magistrates and the promptitude with which they disposed of their heavy criminal cases. To the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. D. A. Smyth, the City Superintendent, Mr. Sant Singh, and to all ranks of the force under their control, special acknowledgment is due for the excellent arrangements and uniform consideration and good temper with which they have met every call on their energies and self-control. Lastly the local Government desires to acknowledge the good services of the Jail Superintendent, Capt. N. S. Jatar, D. S.O., I.M.S., and his staff, under trying conditions of exceptional difficulty.

A. E. MATHIAS,

Chief Secretary to Government,
Central Provinces.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

Dated Pachmarhi, the 1st May 1923.

Communiqué by the Government of the Central Provinces.

In view of the misunderstanding which prevails in regard to Government's attitude in connection with the use of the 'Swararjya' flag, Government considers it desirable to explain its policy in regard thereto.

The local Government has not interfered, and does not propose to interfere, with the use of the 'Swarajya' flag except when it consitutes an offence against the criminal law. When it is proposed to fly the 'Swarajya' flag or to take it in procession in such circumstances as to be likely to cause a breach of the public tranquillity or cause annoyance to any person lawfully employed, the district authorities will take such action under the law as the circumstances demand to prevent such a breach of the peace or such annoyance. It is undoubtedly the case that any form of disrespect to the Union Jack, the national flag of the British Empire, is deeply resented by some classes of loyal subjects of that Empire.

In accordance with this policy the District Magistrate, Jubbulpore, rightly prohibited the flying of the 'Swarajya' flag on the Jubbulpore Town Hall on the occasion of the visit of the Congress deputation. Not only were the circumstances in which the Municipal Committee, Jubbulpore, resolved on this action, such as to indicate that it was intended as an act of disloyalty, but the District Magistrate had before him evidence in the form of a petition from numerous Jubbulpore citizens that the action of the Committee would cause annoyance to a section of the community. Apart from this, the Town Hall at Jubbulpore is held under trust from the donors thereof by the Municipal Committee subject to the general supervision and direction of the Deputy Commissioner. Similarly, the action of the Deputy Commissioner on the 18th March in preventing the 'Swarajya' flag being taken in procession through the Cantonments was in accordance with the policy of Government. The Jubbulpore Cantonments contain a large number of European troops and residents, and had the procession been permitted to proceed, there would undoubtedly have been a risk of a breach of the peace. In the same way at Nagpur, on the 13th April, when an attempt was made to carry this flag in procession through the Civil Station, the Deputy Commissioner informed the leaders of the procession that they were at liberty to proceed to their destination, namely, The Tiger's Gap,' by way of the road past the District Court; when, however,

the leaders persisted in attempting to take the procession directly through the main portion of the Civil Station with the clear intention of causing annoyance to the residents therein, and refused to recognise the authority of the Government officers, action was taken to prevent the procession proceeding.

On the other hand, in Bilaspur, Seoni and other places where it has not yet appeared that the taking of the flag in procession will cause annoyance to any class of persons or will endanger the public peace, the district authorities, consistently with Government policy, have taken no action in the matter.

Moreover, where the circumstances are such as to indicate that a Municipal Committee or other local body has resolved to hoist the 'Swarajya' flag over its building, Government is not prepared to tolerate such action. In such circumstances the resolution of the local body will be rescinded and, if in spite of such prohibition the local body persists in such action, Government will mark its disapproval by withdrawing its grants to such local body or taking such other disciplinary measures as it thinks necessary.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

Dated Nagpur, the 1st May 1923.

Order by the District Magistrate of the Nagpur District.

Order under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code. To the Public of the Town of Nagpur.

Whereas I, Hyde Clarendon Gowan, District Magistrate of the Nagpur District, have information and personal knowledge (1) that on the evening of the 13th April 1923, a procession carrying Swaraj Flags and singing national songs passed into the Civil Station of Nagpur with the intention of causing annoyance to the residents, (2) that this procession refused to obey the lawful orders of the District Superintendent of Police for the control of traffic, (3) that a disturbance of public tranquillity was thereby caused, (4) that it is intended to hold other similar processions which will refuse to obey the lawful orders of the District Authoties :

And whereas it is likely that meetings may be held at which incitements to the holding of such processions may be delivered ;

And whereas, in my opinion, such processions and meetings will cause annoyance to persons lawfully employed and will be likely to lead to a disturbance of the public tranquillity ;

I, therefore, forbid all persons from passing in processions in the area of the Nagpur Civil Station which lies west of the following line :—

Experimental road through the Maharaj Bagh, joining Victoria road from the Maharaj Bagh main gate to the top of the old Ridge, where it joins,

Mount road leading to the Sadar Bazar,

without the special permission of the District Magistrate or from holding any public meeting in the said area at which more than 25 persons are present without the said permission.

And whereas this matter is urgent, I pass this order *ex parte* ;

And I further direct that this order shall remain in force for a period of two months from the date thereof.

ENCLOSURE No. 4.

Dated Nagpur, the 28th June 1923.

Press Communiqué by the Government of the Central Provinces, Nagpur.

Many misleading accounts have gained currency both locally and elsewhere of the measures taken by Government to meet the successive stages of the "National flag" agitation at Nagpur. In order to correct these misapprehensions therefore the Government of the Central Provinces desire to place before the public the sequence of events as they have been unfolded since last March.

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2. The first attack was launched by one Bagwandin, a persistent local agitator, who has served a sentence for sedition, and more recently gained some notoriety by leading the strike at the Central India Mills in December 1922. Speaking so far back as March 23rd, Bhagwandin announced that a great battle against Government would be started in May, and that all laws obstructing the path of progress would be disobeyed. It was not stated what form this Civil Disobedience was to assume, but he alluded significantly to the attacks on the Lawrence Statue, and to the " victory " won by Sunderlal and his companions, who had just previously been arrested in connection with the National flag incident at Jubbulpore.

3. Thereafter on the 12th April one Awari, a Parsi, who has been dismissed from the local Mills, in a bitterly hostile speech, spoke of the anniversary of Jalianwalabagh, and denounced Government for imprisoning the Ali brothers, Mahatma Gandhi, and Hasrat Mohani. He went on to declare that the Government of the Congress was to be established by Satyagraha, and that on the following day a thousand men would assemble at the Congress office in order to march on the Civil Lines. On the evening of the next day, April the 13th, Awari, by way of executing his threat and exposing his hostile intentions, marched from the City into the Civil Station at the head of a large crowd headed by fifty volunteers singing national songs and bearing national banners. Though unwilling to interfere and prevent the flying of the national flag, the local authorities were confronted with the alternative of submitting to what had manifestly been organised as a lawless and hostile demonstration. The demonstrators were allowed therefore to move forward through a portion of the Civil Station, but when the procession reached the residential quarter mainly occupied by Europeans, the Police were directed to take order under Section 30 (1) of the Police Act, and the procession was halted. Awari then openly insisted that he could recognise no orders but those of his own Government, the Congress, and that he was determined to pursue his way, which would have led him still further into the residential quarter and towards the Central Provinces Club. The procession was thereafter stopped, six of its leaders arrested, and the rest pushed back some three hundred yards. So much force only as was necessary was used and in no case did the Police employ their batons. As some of the volunteers sat or lay down upon the road, they had to be dragged to the side, and in this way some of them received a few bruises, from which they recovered on the second day. The statement that two volunteers were rendered unconscious by Police action is inaccurate.

4. Five days later Bhagwandin declared in open meeting that the national flag must be flown over Government House, and again on the 28th April the same threat was publicly repeated by an ex-student named Dandekar, who further declared that Civil Disobedience would begin on the 1st May. At this stage Seth Jamanlal Bajaj, a wealthy Marwari resident of Wardha and a devoted adherent of Mahatma Gandhi, associated himself actively with Bhagwandin, with the result that on the 30th April a notice was published advertizing the route of a second procession into the Civil Station, first to the District Courts, and thence to the Saddar Bazar, which is also in Civil Lines. The local authorities decided not to interfere with a procession along this advertized route.

5. On the evening of the 1st May Seth Jamanlal and Bhagwandin appeared at the District Courts followed by a crowd of some three thousand people, in front of which marched several relays of volunteers, singing songs and carrying banners as before. Finding that no opposition was offered to their progress along their own advertized route the leaders determined to turn aside into the residential quarter which lies in a direction opposite to that to the Saddar Bazar. As they passed the District Courts, therefore they were met by the District Magistrate (Mr. Gowan) in person, who promulgated an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting processions in this portion of the Civil Station, and confronted the leaders with the published notice of their route. The latter at first evinced a stubborn determination to proceed, but in the end yielded to the persuasions of the District Magistrate, who appealed to them not to break own programme and cause further trouble. Influenced by the District Magistrate's efforts, and seeing apparently that they were embarked upon a wrong course, Seth Jamanlal and his companions turned, and went back along their advertized route to the Saddar Bazaar.

6. Arrived there, unfortunately unwise counsels again prevalied—Seth Jamanlal rose, and declared that a great opportunity for Satyagraha must not be missed, that apparent success was no use, and that real success must be achieved. "If the English were annoyed, he added, this cannot be endured, the work must be continued. They were bound to act according to their religious duty, and to overcome "the annoyance of the English people by Satyagraha." Similarly Baghwandin declared that "an act which does not take us to jail cannot be counted a victory. The flag had been stopped that day, but now it must go everywhere. Were the volunteers who had been garlanded for sactrifice and drunk *sherbet* satisfied? No, a volunteer in this fight could not be satisfied—their plans of the last two days had been turned into dreams; they must think over the days' events, and be ready for the morrow." Both the principal leaders then made strong appeals to the volunteers to join the cause and continue the struggle.

7. These appeals reinforced by the call to self-sacrifice, received a response, and in spite of their withdrawal and apparent admission of wrong-doing on the 1st May, on the very next day another procession came up to the Courts, and this time endeavoured to pass over the line whence they had turned back the day before. Eleven volunteers were then arrested for disobedience to an order of the District Magistrate passed under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code. Since that date parties of varying numbers have day after day advanced towards the heart of the Civil Station with the object of breaking the District Magistrate's order and forcing their own arrest.

8. Some misconception has arisen in regard both to the attitude of some residents of the Civil Station, and to the action of Government. The attempt to take a procession carrying the "National" flag through this portion of the Civil Station, where processions have never been taken before, was regarded as a challenge to the Union Jack and an intention to cause annoyance to a section of of the loyal residents. What had begun as a hostile demonstration against a section of loyal residents and the Government has since been continued as organised lawlessness, while Government have acted throughout with the clear knowledge that both in conception and execution the movement is exposed as Civil Disobedience and that the National flag has been used both as a pretext for lawlessness and as an object of false appeal.

9. The local leaders themselves have never made any secret of their object. In his own paper, the *Tarun Maharashtra* of the 8th June, Seth Jamanlal has written that after Nagpur the Satyagrahis "will direct their attentiion towards other acts of injustice, the fundamental object of Satyagraha being to remove all stumbling block in the way of Swaraj." Very similar language was used on the 12th June in Nagpur by the Congress leader Azad Sobhani, who, in appealing to the Nagpur Mahomedans to join the movement, said that "it was the religious duty of every Muslim to bring the Government to its knees with the weapon of truth in his hand." Lately again Seth Jamanlal has publicly announced that after Nagpur he proposes to start a similar movement first in Bengal and then in Madras.

10. Thus has Satyagraha the true meaning of which is an insistence on truth been revealed in Nagpur as a baleful instrument, in the hands of ignorant and misguided men, for the instigation of manifest lawlessness; and hundreds of humble and illiterate recruits have been enlisted, some by offers of money, and others by the more subtle and intimate appeal to self-sacrifice.

ENCLOSURE NO. 5.

Dated 1st September 1923.

Communiqué by the Government of the Central Provinces.

The following statement is published for information. It is reported that in a speech at Bombay on the 18th August in connection with the Nagpur Satyagraha Mr. V. J. Patel stated that "he had gone to the Governor at his express invitation and he wanted to make that point clear". I am directed to deny the

accuracy of that statement. The negotiations for a settlement were initiated by Mr. V. J. Patel with the Home Member of the Government. During the course of those negotiations I was approached by certain members of the Legislative Council and it was suggested to me that I should ascertain whether His Excellency the Governor would be prepared to receive Mr. V. J. Patel. Having ascertained from Mr. V. J. Patel that he acquiesced in this suggestion, I agreed to enquire from His Excellency and after doing so, I wrote a latter to Mr. V. J. Patel that if he desired an interview with the Governor, His Excellency would be prepared te receive him at 11 A.M. on Monday the 15th August. The letter is presumably still in Mr. Patel's possession. Both the Patel brothers attended Government House at the fixed time and were given an interview by His Excellency the Governor. Other inaccuracies and suppressions of facts have occurred in the accounts of the negotiations, which it may be necessary to correct later.

ENCLOSURE No. 5.

Mr. Vithalbhai's Statement.

The following statement has been issued by Mr. Vithalbhai J. Patel with the concurrence of the Home Member of the Central Provinces Government on the Nagpur Satyagraha movement.

" Numerous enquiries from various parts of the country have been addressed to me asking me to publish a brief account of the interviews that I had with the members of the Central Provinces Government and the terms of agreement, if any, reached as a result of these interviews, I have also seen all sorts of conflicting versions appearing in the press in this connection and the public naturally expects me to make some statement on the subject. I, therefore, with the concurrence of the Hon'ble the Home Member of the Central Provinces Government, issue the following :—

" I initiated the negotiations with the Home Memeber of the Central Provinces Government after my arrival at Nagpur and before the meeting of the Legislative Council. From the speeches of the official members of the Central Provinces Government in the Council I gathered that there was a gennuine desire on the part of the Government also for mutual understanding on the Satyagraha movement. I visited the Chief Secretary and several members of the Legislative Council and was granted an interview by His Excellency the Governor. There were about a dozen interviews at which I found that the Home Member was ready to allow a procession under conditions considered necessary by the Government and which we were prepared to accept as honourable. Mr. V. J. Vallabhai Patel was present at some of the interviews. We fully understood the position of the Government and I trust Government understood ours. All interviews were of a confidential nature and it was understood that neither party was to publish an account of the interviews. Under these circumstances the procession of the 18th August passed through the Civil Lines and thus ended the whole trouble."

ENCLOSURE No. 7.

Press extracts.

Extract from the Statesman, *dated the 12th September 1923.*

From the full story of the Nagpur flag agitation as recounted by the Publicity Officer of the Central Provinces, it appears that the trouble originated in an attempt by local agitators to organize a demonstration of civil disobedience. The method adopted was to arrange processions to march through the streets in defiance of police regulations and the orders of the local authorities. To judge from the difficulty experienced in keeping up the numbers required to make the processions sufficiently impressive, it may be inferred that most people in Nagpur were sensible enough to avoid participation in this folly. Numerous " volunteers " of all castes and ages were brought to Nagpur for the purpose of defying the District Magistrate's orders, and when local and provincial sources of recruitment began to fall, reinforcements were obtained from other provinces, chiefly Bombay and Madras.

How their expenses were defrayed is another question. An agitation of this kind, however, even though it be largely factitious, makes a heavy demand upon the tact and discretion of the local authorities. If they err on the side of undue severity, they are sure to incur censure, besides running the risk of converting the agitators into object of popular sympathy and bedecking them with the coveted halo of martyrdom. Leniency, on the other hand, may embolden the agitators to go from one extreme to another, thus increasing the mischief until drastic measures become inevitable. Moreover, whatever degree of toleration may be claimed for political demonstrations of any kind, the authorities cannot neglect the duty of protecting the law-abiding population from annoyance and possible disorder. Thus the task of the local authorities at Nagpur and of the Central Provinces Government was far from easy, and the results show that it was accomplished in a manner which deserves cordial appreciation. As regards the processions, the authorities rightly drew the line at the point where they were likely to cause annoyance to residents or to endanger public tranquillity, and the prescription of routes to be followed was an elementary matter of police duty. At an early stage in the proceedings, the agitators sought to shift the issue from the idea of civil disobedience to the right of carrying the *swarajya* flag. Excepting in so far as this or any other emblem might be misused in such a manner as to cause an offence against the law, there was no objection to the flag, nor was the right to exhibit and carry it in orderly procession ever disputed. The agitators, apparently, endeavoured to camouflage a bad case by changing it into a weak one. When the representative of the Working Committee of the Congress came on the scene, all intention to insult the Union Jack or to cause annoyance by the display of the flag, was promptly disavowed. In the course of further interchanges of views, it was made clear that the Congress representatives did not claim any unrestricted right to take processions along public roads, and that such processions were not intended to annoy any section of the community. This sweet reasonableness quickly led to a settlement of the trouble. A route was prescribed, a procession was organised in accordance with the conditions laid down for the safety of the public, and the whole dispute was at an end. Two important principles have been vindicated by the Government of the Central Provinces. The first, as the Publicity officer states, is that of submission to lawful authority, and the second is that demonstrations of this kind cannot be permitted without application to the local authorities and due observance of the conditions imposed. No civilised community in the world can afford to dispense with such elementary rules as these. Thanks to the tact and discretion of the local authorities, an agitation sinister in its origin has died a natural death, and the officials concerned fully deserve the thanks accorded to them by the provincial government. So ends the story, and perhaps the main reflection which will occur to the ordinary reader is the contrast between the disorders in the Punjab and the peaceful issue of this once threatening dispute.

Extract from the Times of India, *dated the 10th September 1923.*

THE TRUTH ABOUT NAGPUR.

For some days now the Extremist Press has again been full of angry chattering about the Nagpur flag affair. This time it is not the purity of motive of the Satyagrahis that our friends have been trying to prove; they are trying to make out that at Nagpur the travelling beauty-chorus of extremists which calls itself the People of India won a great victory against Government and after patient months of effort at last had its way. The Central Provinces Government communiqué which is now published finally disposes of all such claims. It shows how the Patels and their friends were able at Nagpur to annoy part of the population and to be a nuisance to Government for some months, but finally they had to recognise the constituted authorities and to act in accordance with orders. The communiqué does well to bring out again the shady origin of the movement—the avowed intention of the leaders to provoke a revolutionary agitation and to annoy the European popu ation—for this is a phase of the affair which the Extremist Press has often tried to blot out. No amount of wriggling can get away from the fact, recorded in the speeches of the leaders, that it was an agitation deliberately worked up and not a spontaneous protest to an attitude previously adopted by the Central Provinces

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Government. The pious side of the Satyagraha movement was from the start pure humbug, though it imposed on many of the ignorant youths who went to jail at the bidding of the leaders.

This is fairly old history, but the communiqué exposes the falsity of extremist accounts of more recent incidents. The interview which the Governor granted the Patels was granted at their request at a time when they were finding it difficult to get volunteers for jail either locally or in other parts of India. It was not, as the extremists have hinted, a matter of the Governor humbly petitioning the Patels to see him. Then again the procession held on Gandhi day last month did not represent a glorious victory for "the people". The leaders made the fullest possible recognition of the responsibility of the local officials for authorising processions, drawing up rules in accordance with which they must be held and controlling them when they occurred. An application was made to the District Superintendent of Police for holding a procession. He stated the regulations which must be observed in order that no section of the population might be annoyed, and the procession was held accordingly. The position of Government was exactly the same at the finish as it had been at the start; the authority of Government must be recognized and no section of the population must be wantonly annoyed. The communiqué deals with one more matter. For some days now one or two irresponsible papers have taken a childish delight in trumpeting abroad the discovery of the Patel brothers that publicity arrangements were conducted by the Commissioner of Nagpur, and have been broadly hinting that his actions were, to use the phrase normally applied to Government servants who perform their duty, *ultra vires*. This ridiculous story is now disposed of. Publicity arrangements were entrusted to the Commissioner of Nagpur by the Central Provinces Government, and the public owes him a deep debt of gratitude for his energetic co-operation in the exposure of a sinister political movement.

Extract from The Mahratta, *dated the 9th September 1923.*

VICTORY IN A PICKWICKIAN SENSE!

Pandit Motilal Nehru has clearly brought out the real nature of the Nagpur flag affair in one of his speeches. He fully appreciated the devoted self-sacrifice of the workers, but he expressed his regret that he could not pay a similar tribute to the conception itself; nor could he appreciate how the result could possibly be taken as a victory for the Congress. He failed entirely to see what principle had been established and how the country had advanced by the immense sacrifice made. On the contrary, he gave it as his considered opinion that by taking the last procession through the prohibited area with the permission of the authorities and obeying orders of the Police Superintendent about *jais* the organisers of the movement had practically abandoned the first principles of Non-co-operation. The assertion is cruel undoubtedly, but true beyond dispute. All the leaders of the no-change party are making huge efforts to tom-tom this as their victory but a closer scrutiny shows up that the victory claimed is a victory only in the Pickwickian sense. Mr. Vallabhai has issued another statement, perhaps to cover with strong words, against the critics of the movement, the ignominy with which the whole affair had to be ended by the underhand machinations of himself and his brother. The statement instead of saving Mr. Vallabhai, that tower of truthfulness, lays him headlong on the ground. Mr. Vallabhai's love of truth was already published when he point-blank asked a vernacular press representative to contradict the news of his visit with the Governor of the Central Provinces and also when he, being heckled and cornered by the representative, evaded giving a direct answer by such prevarications as, "I did not see the Governor", "I might have seen him in his private capacity" and so on. It need hardly be said that this tergiversation would have better fitted the lips of a professional hypocrite, rather than a truthful, spiritual, self-purified Vallabhai.

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In his latest statement this Pecksniff of Non-co-operation has remarked that he would not wait for an invitation if he once understood that the opposite party was anxious to know the other side. Did the Government of the Central Provinces let Mr. Vallabhai know that that they were sighing for their side being explained

to this representative of the Working Committee who was deputed to study the situation ? Or did he learn of Government's anxiety through telepathy ? But the communiqué issued by the Chief Secretary of the Central Provinces Government is emphatic on the point. Denying the accuracy of the statement of Mr. V. J. Patel in a public meeting at Bombay that he had gone to the Governor at his express invitation, the communiqué runs : " The negotiations for a settlement were initiated by Mr. J. V. Patel with the Home Member of the Government. During the course of those negotiations I was approached by certain members of the Legislative Council and it was suggested to me that I should ascertain whether His Excellency the Governor would be prepared to receive Mr. V. J. Patel..... Both the Patel brothers attended Government House at the fixed time and were given an interview by His Excellency the Governor ". It is for Mr. Vallabhai to contradict this assertion or admit that the Central Provinces Government did not seek an interview with the stalwart Mr. Vallabhai, nor signify in any way their anxiety to clear their attitude towards the flag affair to this august student of the Satyagraha campaign.

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Like the ignominous surrender of the Satyagraha campaign, the matter of petition to the District Superintendent of Police for permission to conduct the procession also must inevitably stick like a bur to the coat-tail of Mr. Vallabhai. It is no use maintaining that a petition for permission was not sent to the District Superintendent of Police. All the conditions were determined previously in a compromise effected between the Government and leaders of the Satyagraha campaign. According to the conditions, the days of Satyagraha, the method, the roads, etc., all such details were settled beforehand and the batch of Satyagrahis submitted to all such restrictions. When, thus, all such humiliating limitations were acceded to and when the batch of Satyagrahis meticulously observed them, it is sheer impudence to aver that the batch passed off without being arrested by the Government. A quarrel ensued between a husband and his wife about painting the walls of their house. The husband wanted the white colour, while the wife had a special liking for grey. In the tussel, the wife got the better of the husband, the walls were painted grey and still the bragging husband boasted that he was successful in the conflict. Those who are in the know, are full well aware that the whole flag affair was puffed up to spite the Swarajya Party by certain honourable gentlemen who have made no secret of their hatred against Maharashtra, that they themselves were not prepared to take part in the Satyagraha and that, when the so-called Satyagraha grew too much for them, they anyhow wriggled out of it by means which are best left unexposed. A movement that was got up by a party with the philanthropic object of putting the opposite party in the wrong box was never likely to be better than what the Nagpur episode has proved itself to be. Well might Mr. Vallabhai and his confreres enjoy the pleasure of being the foolers and the fooled in the Nagpur affair. The Swarajya Party is not spited at all and its weathers are unwrung ; but the poor fellows who cut their noses to spite the Swarajya Party must be ruing the evil day indeed !

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT ON NEWSPAPERS IN THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY FOR WEEK ENDING THE 8TH SEPTEMBER 1923.

Extract from The Mahratta, *dated the 9th September.*

34. "Pandit Motilal Nehru has clearly brought out the real nature of the Nagpur flag affair in one of his speeches. All the leaders of the no-change party are making huge efforts to tom-tom this as their victory, but a closer scrutiny shows up that the victory claimed is a victory only in a Pickwickian sense. Mr. Vallabhai has issued another statement, perhaps to cover with strong words, against the critics of the movement, the ignominy with which the whole affair had to be ended by the underhand machinations of himself and his brother. The statement instead of saving Mr. Vallabhai, that tower of truthfulness, lays him headlong on the ground.....Those who are in the know, are full well aware that the whole flag affair was puffed up to spite the Swarajya Party by certain honourable gentlemen who have made no secret of their hatred against Maharashtra, that they themselves

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EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT ON NEWSPAPERS IN THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY FOR WEEK ENDING THE 1ST SEPTEMBER 1923.

Extract from the Kesari (*109*), *dated the 28th August 1923.*

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47. The *Kesari* refers to the criticism appearing in the Swarajya (*vide* paragraph 43 of Weekly Report No. 34 of 1923) against its remarks passed on the termination of the National Flag Satyagraha at Nagpur and says:—Authentic information published in connection with the termination of the Satyagraha leads us to the conclusion that the matter was settled by compromise. Every patriotic person will be grieved to find that victory in the matter must be assigned to Government. If the Satyagrahis were against the very idea of compromise why did they interview the Governor and why did they seek the help of the members of the Central Provinces Legislative Council? The terms of compromise constitute an unqualified surrender on the part of the Satyagrahis.

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Extract from the Hitavada, *dated the 22nd August 1923.*

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GANDHI DAY IN NAGPUR.

The order of the District Magistrate, Nagpur, prohibiting procession under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, expired on the 16th August. The District Superintendent of Police issued a fresh order restricting processions in the Civil Station from the 17th instant. A copy of this order is published elsewhere. Apparently as a result of negotiations between the Government and the Satyagraha leaders, a procession with flag was allowed to march to the Civil Station on Saturday the 18th which was Gandhi day. It is understood that there was an understanding between the Government and the Satyagraha leaders regarding the route, strength and the time of the procession. Not more than one hundred Satyagrahis were allowed to march. They were to finish their procession between 12 NOON to 3 P.M. They were prohibited from shouting *jais* in certain places. The Satyagrahis apparently agreed to these terms. About 80 of them with about fifty Swaraj flags started from the City in the noon, crossed the Railway Bridge, which was hitherto the scene of arrest, marched into the interior of the Civil Station which was hitherto kept free from the contamination of the much abused Satyagrahi. They passed the Secretariat building, then went in front of the Commissioner's office, then went by the side of the Church and reached the Sadar Bazar. The District Superintendent of Police, Mr. Smyth, was accompanying the procession on horseback along with some police officers and several men of the Reserved Police. Police pickets were also posted all along the route. Messrs. Slaney and Deoskar, the Magistrates, were also coming in a tonga, probably to give orders for arrest in case of necessity. Messrs. Vallabhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad and a few other were accompanying it. The press reporters alone were allowed to march with it. The procession went in solemn silence all through the Civil Station. There were no shouts and no *jais* and no songs. It looked like a funeral procession and the Satyagrahis were seen marching quietly. It reached Sadar Bazar after two hours' march and there

was a faint outburst of Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai. Then one leader came forward and congratulated the Satyagrahis on their wonderful courage and patience and asked them to disperse. The Swaraj flags were then collected, huddled together in a tonga and the brave Satyagrahis dispersed in different directions.

ARRESTS STOPPED.

Several volunteers who were arrested on the morning of the 18th instant were released by the Police in view of the compromise arrived at between the Government and the Satyagrahis. It is understood that the Congress leaders have issued instructions to all Congress Committees not to send any more volunteers in view of this compromise. A meeting of the non-co-operators and Satyagrahis was held on the 18th night in Nagpur at which it was announced that Flag Satyagraha has stopped. The Asram presents a deserted appearance and volunteers who arrived in Nagpur with the object of courting arrest are returning back in search of fresh fields and pastures new. There has been no procession and no arrest in Nagpur since the 17th instant. All's well that ends well.

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Extracts from the Central Provinces selections.

1. Writing on the Nagpur flag Satyagraha, the "Udaya" (Amraoti) remarks :—We have for long been hearing of a compromise between the Government and the Satyagrahi leaders, and it has at last come to be true. Although we have not the detailed information on the subject, we are inclined to believe the conditions of the compromise are far from being honourable to the Satyagrahis. From what we learn the last flag procession was taken on the 18th August 1923 by an advertised route practically under the escort of some Police constables with the District Superintendent of the Police accompanying the processionists on horse-back. The very description clearly indicates that it was more appropriately a procession of co-operators, since it was evidently organised with the previous permission of the Police authorities! Miserable end, indeed, of the Satyagraha offered so far! Has not the very principle underlying the movement been surrendered? The truth appears to be that the so-called non-co-operationists think it below their dignity to seek unity with their own countrymen differing in political views, but are ever ready to try for compromises with the Government with the help of the intermediaries even at a cost to their doctrine of non-co-operation. Be that as it may, every one concerned in the Satyagraha affair can now have a sigh of relief in consequence of the movement having ended. If the non-co-operationists still maintain that they have carried the day, well we offer our heartfelt congratulations to them!

2. The "Prajapaksha (Akola)" says :—From the way in which the Satyagraha struggle has terminated, one is really at a loss to understand whether to call it a success or surrender of the Satyagrahis. It is to be regretted that Mr. Vallabhai who spoke so enthusiastically about the flag agitation at the time when he took upon himself the responsibility of conducting it, should have brought about such a dishonourable compromise for the Satyagrahis. As a matter of fact, the Central Provinces Council itself by adopting the flag resolutions made it too difficult for the Government to persist in its policy towards the flag movement. As it was almost impossible for the Government to renew the prohibition order issued by the District Magistrate, Nagpur. Where, then, was the necessity for Vallabhai to so impatiently seek a private settlement with the Government? Should his conduct be taken to mean that he anyhow wanted to free himself from the flag bother? Or else, why did he at all frequent the Government House in this connection? If it is his honest conviction that the Government is fully authorised to regulate and control any and every procession, pray why this show of Satyagraha so far? That the flag movement has at last come to an end is a source of relief both to the Government and the Satyagrahis, and the latter have no reason to justifiably claim success for themselves. One thing is, however clear from what has happened and it is this. The Satyagrahis are not what they profess to be, namely, the advocates of the truth. When Vithalbhai openly announced that his brother Vallabhai has interviewed the Governor in connection with the flag agitation, it is inexplicable that our contemporary the "Bombay Chronicle" should have failed to throw light on it! and what surprises us still more is Vallabhai's own studious silence over the interview with the Governor! This is love, indeed, for Satya—the truth, the very creed of the Satyagrahis!

3. The Lokmat (Yeotmal) writes :—By vigorously continuing to court prison till the moment the Nagpur District Magistrate's prohibitory order was in force, the Satyagrahis may well be said to have scored a victory over the Government. But the manner in which the flag was brought to an end detracted much from their so-called victory. Above all, the intervention by the local Legislative Council changed the aspect of the flag question altogether. Although the non-co-operators have all along been branding the pro-Council people as traitors to the motherland, it is, after all the present Councillors of the province who ran to the rescue of the flagwallas and saved the situation from being more humiliating to them. In a sense, the Councillors upheld the cause of Satyagraha regarding the right of way and they deserve our praise for having successfully vindicated the right. The position of the Satyagrahis, however, has not only been indefensible but exceedingly deplorable. When the organisers of the movement did not think it derogatory to their principle to take the last of their processions through the prohibited area subject to the dishonourable conditions prescribed by the Government, what objection was there for them to have long before proceeded on the lines they have now done! One thing is evident that the Satyagrahis must have run out of breath by having tried every possible resource in order to keep the movement alive so far. The end of the agitation, however, disgraceful to the flag people, ought, therefore, to bring relief to them as well as to the Government. What is amusing, indeed, is that the Satyagrahis should arrogate success to themselves in spite of their clear defeat.

4. On the same subject, the "Udaya (Amroati)" remarks :—How the flag fight ended is no longer a secret. What pains us is the way in which it was dragged to a close utterly disgraceful to the non-co-operators. When Mr. Vallabhai Patel, their leader, unhesitatingly negotiated for compromise with, and undertook to fulfil the conditions imposed by, the Government after continuing the agitation so long, what harm was there if the organisers of the movement had followed a similar course in its earlier stages? So far as we know, defiance of Government of authority is the essence of the doctrine of non-co-operation, and this principle has so far been acted up to by its advocates as is evident from their boycott of law courts and Legislative Council. But what is the position of the non-co-operators and their doctrine when a man of the type of Mr. Patel came forward to negotiate for settlement with the Government and willingly accepted the conditions? Mr. Patel, it is to be regretted, tried to conceal his interview with the Governor but in vain! In order to whitewash the interview affair, he subsequently stated that "it may have been a private visit." This is a mere camouflage, and it only detracts from the significance of Satyagraha all the more! On the strength of the information we have we are even prepared to state that it was prearranged with a high official (sic) that the Government should not come forth to contradict Mr. Patel, were he to deny before the public the charge that he had sought for a compromise. From the fate of the Satyagraha movement it is preposterous to suppose that the agitators have won the day. On the contrary, we believe that they have sustained a defeat on all points—which reminds us of the notorious set-back the civil disobedience movement received at Bardoli.

Elsewhere the same paper remarks :—The statement issued by Mr. Vallabhai Patel on behalf of the Congress Working committee accepting the conditions for the regulation of the flag procession in Nagpur has, indeed, created an awkward situation in the country, in that it is likely to serve as a precedent for the Government in imposing restrictions on any procession whatsoever.

5. The "Mahrashtra" (Nagpur) states :—We as well as most of the people in the city were up till now under the impression that a compromise has been arrived at between the Satyagrahis and the Government in the flag affair at Nagpur. But if the "bare facts" of the case as given by its own correspondent in the "Bombay Chronicle" of the 24th instant be true—and we have no reason to disbelieve them—it is a question whether what has transpired should be termed as a compromise between the contending parties or an abject surrender on the part of the Satyagrahis! The correspondent of the "Chronicle" clearly says that the Government did not at all bind itself with any conditions, not even with the condition about the release of the Satyagrahi prisoners, while the Satyagrahis alone had to abide by the

terms imposed on them by the Government! If that be the case, what, indeed, did the Satyagrahi leaders achieve beyond the right of marching the procession of the 18th instant by prescribed routes without any interference from the Government and that too for only a day? Under the circumstances, the arrangement can only be described as a "surrender" and not a "compromise". No man in his senses would blame Mr. Vallabhai Patel for the part he played in the flag drama. Those of his non-co-operationist friends alone ought to be really blamed who attempt to hoodwink the public by concealing the fact that Mr. Patel never called upon the Governor to negotiate the terms of settlement with him.

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION ON THE NAGPUR FLAG AGITATION.

"Hitavada," *12th September 1923.*

6. In its leading article, the "Hitavada" (Nagpur) observes; "After the publication of a garbled version by Mr. Vallabhai Patel, the Central Provinces Government was bound, both for its own sake and for the sake of the public at large, to publish its version of the entire agitation. There are people in this world whose mentality it is difficult to understand and who will be convinced by the version which meets their own predilections in the matter and by no other. Except to such the Government version of the flag affair and especially the portion about the circumstances under which the procession passed through a part of the prohibited area on 18th August would appear to be reliable. On the 16th August, the District Magistrate's order expired automatically and the local Government had not continued the order under its special powers under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code. On the 17th August, however, an order had been passed by the District Superintendent of Police laying down certain routes for procession which made it impossible for processions to pass through the Civil Station area without a special order of the District Superintendent of Police. Simultaneously with this order a notice was published by Mr. Vallabhai Patel which was dated 16th August but was publicly distributed on 17th August and in which he made it appear that a procession of five volunteers was to pass in the prohibited area on the date as a fresh challenge to the authorities. No doubt, it may have been necessary for Mr. Patel to rouse the drooping spirits of his volunteers by making them believe that they were martyrs and were courting arrest or even worse, if they ventured into the prohibited area on the 17th. The procession on 17th was dropped and a larger one arranged for the 18th. Before the procession of 18th actually passed, everything about the conditions under which it was to go had been settled—this the communiqué now clearly shows. An *intimation* according to Mr. Patel and an *application* according to Government, was actually sent to the District Superintendent of Police proposing the procession. Of course, there was no question of arresting any processionist so long as the conditions were observed and they were in fact faithfully observed. It is clear that the two statements that there was no agreement or understanding with Government before the procession passed and that the Government 'thought it better to let the procession pass without interference' are not correct. There could, of course, be no interference by the Police so long as the conditions were observed. If one reads between the lines, it is clear even from Mr. Patel's version that an understanding had been arrived at with the Government before the procession. Whether it should be called an *agreement* or *compromise* is a mere play on words. Says Mr. Patel..... 'the programme of the 18th was apparently so adjusted *as to meet the opposite point of view*, as far as it was possible, without giving up anything essential for which the struggle was fought.' While we have always admired the Satyagrahis for their sacrifices in going to jail we confess we feel that all this sacrifice and waste of public money might have been well saved. Satyagrahi processionists have not got one inch of ground further than what they could have at any time reasonably obtained from Government without such misplaced sacrifice. We cannot conclude without drawing one further moral from the struggle and it is this. A serious responsibility lies on public leaders to state the absolute truth and not even with the claim of victory can they justify any association of untruth. Judged by that standard, we leave the estimate about those who published the Congress version to the public. There is nothing about which anybody need be ashamed as far as the conditions go and it may well be claimed by those interested that they got the best terms they could under the circumstances. But this cannot justify the suppression of truth or suggestion of untruth which is apparent on Mr. Patel's version."

MS147HD—21-11-23—32—GMPS

59.

SECRET.

No. 5 of 1923.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

HOME DEPARTMENT.

POLITICAL.

To

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE VISCOUNT PEEL,

His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

Delhi, the 6th December ~~November~~ 1923.

My Lord,

We transmit herewith the report of the Government of the Central Provinces on the agitation in connection with the so-called Swaraj or National Flag at Nagpur which was required by Your Lordship's telegram no. 3413, dated September 20th, 1923. This report, read with its accompaniment, Resolution no. 1202-1057-II., dated the 8th September 1923 of the Government of the Central Provinces, gives a sufficiently clear and comprehensive narrative of the course of events and in our observations upon it we propose to restrict ourselves to the more important issues affecting the general political situation which emerge.

2. As to the character and design of the agitation there can be no possibility of doubt. Though it originated locally and was ostensibly directed to vindicate the national status of the 'Swaraj' flag and to assert the right to hold political demonstrations in public places, the ulterior object, which was repeatedly avowed, was to constitute it an item in a general plan of civil disobedience, that is, a concerted campaign against the authority of Government. It was in this form and with this intention that it was adopted by the Congress Committee and the Government of the Central Provinces rightly took up the challenge. In view of the fact that the exhibition of the flag was not in itself an offence, their legal position was not an easy one, but, at this stage, they maintained a sound, firm and perfectly consistent policy in regard to the flag processions. Their local officers behaved with remarkable discretion and restraint and were successful in preventing any incidents which could give vitality and substance to what was really a factitious agitation.

3. When matters were in this posture, the Government of India, while advising that action should be primarily directed against the local organization of the agitation and its principles rather than its minor agents, generally approved of the proceedings of the local Government and assured them of support in measures taken to maintain law and order and the authority of Government. The situation was verbally discussed on July 1st by His Excellency the Viceroy and the Honourable the Home Member with His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces and the Hon'ble Sir M. Joshi, with special reference to

suggestions which had then been made as to the possibility of terminating the agitation on the receipt of certain assurances from its promoters. The views of the Government of India were fully explained by His Excellency the Viceroy and in particular the danger of entering into any form of negotiation was pointed out. In view of this and of the fact that the issues raised had obviously passed beyond the bounds of an incident of purely local concern, we are constrained to express our regret that the local Government should have considered itself justified in taking part in negotiations with the Congress representatives without previous consultation with us. Communications limited to an explanation of the policy and intentions of Government, as already determined and as recently announced by His Excellency the Governor in addressing the local Legislative Council, might have been to good purpose; but the communications actually entered into were liable to the construction of being, and were indeed to some extent in substance, of the nature of negotiations directed towards an agreement or compromise. In particular, whatever passed with regard to the release of prisoners, if not amounting to a definite understanding, was sufficiently tangible to impel the local Government to the conclusion that failure to release could be justifiably regarded as a breach of faith; and we consider that a commitment of this kind, whether implicit or explicit, should not have been made without prior consultation with the Government of India. The result of these proceedings was to present the Government of India with a situation in which any reversal of the action to which the local Government was already committed was clearly impracticable.

4. On the question whether, at the stage when the negotiations were opened, the previous action of the Government had not already practically defeated the agitation, we are disposed to accept the estimate of the Central Provinces Government. The local resources for sustaining the agitation were, no doubt, almost, if not wholly, exhausted but the adoption of the movement by the Congress Committee and the support which the Committee succeeded in obtaining for it from extra-provincial sources had undoubtedly given it an impetus the extent and durability of which were then difficult to appreciate. The agitation had assumed more clearly than at any previous stage the aspect of a contest between the Government established by law and the forces organised against it, and His Excellency the Governor justly summed up the position in his address to the Legislative Council in the following words:—"The local Government regards this agitation as clearly civil disobedience, an attempt to overcome the authority of Government, and is determined that this challenge to lawful authority, this defiance of the law, should be resisted with all the resources at its command. In this policy it confidently hopes for the support of all law-abiding citizens including the members of this Council."

5. We recognize that the situation had become extremely embarrassing to the local Government and entailed serious dislocation of the normal administration and their desire to terminate it as expeditiously as possible was natural and intelligible; but this result was attained with considerable prejudice to wider considerations. The local Government has adduced a strong body of testimony for the view that public opinion regards the conclusion of the agitation as a victory for Government. In many quarters this was undoubtedly the case, though the strictures passed by the Swaraj party on the Gandhiite section, which was responsible for the movement, must be discounted by their mutual animosities which were at that time particularly active. On the other hand, the fact

that the Congress representatives were admitted to parley and that terms were concluded with them has been advanced, both at the Congress Session and by the Parbandhak Committee, as evidence that persistent pressure on Government is not devoid of results. As requested in Your Lordship's telegram above quoted, we have pointed out to the Government of the Central Provinces the inconvenience arising from the first intimation of matters of such importance being received by Your Lordship and ourselves from press reports.

We have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servants,

(Signed) READING.

" RAWLINSON.

" M. M. SHAFI.

" W. M. HAILEY.

" ~~B. N. SARMA.~~

" B. P. BLACKETT.

" A. C. CHATTERJEE.

" ~~D. T. CHADWICK.~~

LIST OF ENCLOSURES.

Letter from the Government of the Central Provinces, no. 163-I.; dated the 1st October 1923 and enclosures.

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No.

1923.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

HOME DEPARTMENT.

POLITICAL.

No. 5, DATED DELHI, THE 6th December 1923.

(COPY.)

LETTER TO HIS MAJESTY'S SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

SUBJECT.

Nagpur Flag Agitation.

MS147HD—21-11-23—32—GMPS

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL, FILE NO. 280 OF 1923, SERIAL NOS. 1—34 & K. W.

Civil Disobedience movement in the Central Provinces, etc.

Serial No. 34.—From Sydney Oliver, Esq., to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor General of India in Council, no. 4, dated the 24th January 1924.

SUBJECT.—Nagpur Flag Agitation.

I have considered in Council the despatch from Your Excellency's Governmen in the Home Department, (Secret) no. 5, dated the 6th December 1923, regarding the Nagpur Flag Agitation.

I agree with the views expressed in that despatch, and in view of the time that has elapsed and the fect that the matter of the Swaraj flag seems, for the time being at least, to have lost its prominence in internal politics, I think it unnecessary now to reply further to Your Excellency's despatch of the 31st May last.

MC216HD—8—19-3-24—GIPS

.....DEPARTMENT

Home Political BRANCH

.....Controlling Agency

SUITATION.....

No.....1.....

1924

Subject.....

F. No. 1/II/1924 - Political

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v us reference

Later reference

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-1 AI/62—25-2-63—2,00,000

This question was discussed today at a meeting at which the following were present :-

H.E. the Governor
The Hon'ble Finance Member
The Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States,
The Commissioner, Lahore,
The Colonel Commandant, Lahore Brigade
The Administrator of Nabha
The Deputy Commissioner of Lahore
The Deputy Inspector General, C.I.D.
The Senior Superintendent of Police, Lahore
The Chief Secretary.

2. The information in possession of Government is to the effect that a "jatha" of at least 500 will start from Amritsar for Jaiton on the 9th of February. It will probably be accompanied by a band and will carry a copy of the "Granth Sahib". The "jatha" will probably be of a more truculent character than any that has hitherto gone to Jaiton and there are reasons to think that the arrest of the "jatha" or of the leaders would be resisted with violence.

3. It was decided on the suggestion of the Administrator of Nabha, and with the concurrence of the Agent to the Governor General and the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, that the "jatha" should be allowed to proceed to Jaiton and that no attempt should be made to arrest leaders ~~xxx~~ or members of it in British India. Among the reasons advanced in support of this view was the desirability of seeing what effect the march of so large a "jatha" would have on the country-side. It is possible that it may receive very little sympathy from villagers, as it will probably make heavy demands for supplies etc. If a second "jatha" of the same size and character attempts a similar pilgrimage to Jaiton, it should be dealt with in British India.

4. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar is to be instructed to inform the Agent to the Governor General and the Administrator of Nabha as soon as the "jatha" starts and to describe as accurately as possible its character and personnel. Arrangements should be made for a staff of plain clothes men to accompany the "jatha".

5. It is intended to treat the "jatha" on arrival at Jaiton on the lines on which previous "jathas" have been treated. A small party will be permitted to enter the "gurdwara" to perform "Akhand Path", if they give a written agreement not to discuss any political subject. If these terms are refused, entry into the "gurdwara" will not be permitted and members of the "jatha" will be deported in batches to Bawal as before.

6. It is an essential part of this plan that the "S.G.P.C." organization at Rewari adjoining Bawal, which has hitherto assisted the Akalis deported to Bawal to return to their homes, should be broken up. Instructions to this effect will be issued to the Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon, who should defer action till he receives information from the Administrator of Nabha as to the date of arrival of the first batch of deportees.

7. The Colonel Commandant, Lahore Brigade, agreed to arrange for a squadron of Cavalry from Lahore Cantt. to be ready to move at short notice from about the 9th of February.

8. Information has also been received by Government that a meeting of "jathedars" is to be held on the 8th of February in the "Akal Takht" at Amritsar. It was decided to instruct the Deputy Commissioners of Amritsar and Lahore to ascertain, if possible, the names of persons attending this meeting and to arrest and prosecute under the Criminal Law Amendment Act any against whom evidence is available. No arrests are contemplated at the actual meeting.

Sd. H.D. Craik, 6-2-1924.

A meeting was held at the Imperial Secretariat, Delhi, on the 9th February, the following being present :-

The Hon'ble Sir Malcolm Hailey.

The Hon'ble Mr. J.P. Thompson.

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar.

Mr. H.D. Craik.

Mr. Wilson-Johnston.

Major G.D. Ogilvie.

Mr. Craik explained the present position to the meeting. He said that 500 Akalis were to leave Amritsar on the 9th February and march to Jaito which they expected to reach on the 21st February, the anniversary of the Nankana affair. The object of this jatha was to hold an ahkandpath at the Gangsar Gurdwara, Jaito, and the members of the Jatha had sworn an oath at the Akhal Takht to perform the ahkandpath at Jaito, or not to return alive to Amritsar.

Mr. Craik laid before the meeting the tour programme of the jatha. He stated that the first idea of the Punjab Government was to arrest the leaders of the jatha on their way through British territory, but they had eventually decided to allow the jatha to pass unmolested, especially in view of the fact that it had been given out that en route no political speeches of any sort were to be made and that the jatha was to confine its activities to prayer meetings at the various places at which it would halt. Mr. Thompson elicited an assurance that the Nabha administration might depend on the Punjab Government to prevent an overwhelming invasion, but it was considered that an invasion by 500 men only could not be described as unmanageable.

The Punjab Government would however take action to prevent the march of any other jathas of similar numbers which might leave Amritsar for Jaito after this

the present jatha had been disposed of.

The question of holding up the jatha on the borders of the Nabha State was then discussed. It was felt that there were tactical objections to action on these lines and that the easiest method of dealing with the jatha would probably be to allo it to enter the Jaito enclave and there to deal with it in such manner as might be feasible, though it was not desired to fetter the discretion of the Administrator too rigidly.

The different methods of dealing with the jatha on arrival at Jaito were then discussed. It was decided as a preliminary that a notice should be issued to the press* and to the jatha x that there would be no objection to 50 men entering the Gurudwara for the purpose of performing Akhandpath subject to the undertaking that the ceremony would be a purely religious one and that no political speeches or discussion would be permitted. The jatha should also be met at each of the last three stages before it reaches Nabha territory by the local Thanadar or other suitable official who should deliver a message explaining the conditions on which 50 of their number would be permitted to enter the Gurudwara. If these conditions were accepted 50 men should be permitted to enter the Gurudwara and remain there for 60 hours in order to complete the akhandpath, the remaining 450 men being required to leave the State forthwith. The Administrator must however have discretion to waive this in whole or part if it seems advisable at the time. After completion of the ceremony the whole jatha should depart forthwith.

It was however considered improbable that the jatha would accept these conditions. In that case it was decided that the jatha should be dealt with as follows :-

* See notice attached (issued to the press on 10.2.24)

x See notice attached (copy handed to Mr. Wilson-Johnston who will take necessary action in communication with Punjab Govt.)

It should be met at the border by the inhabitants of Jaito who would be instructed to protest against the invasion of their village and to remonstrate with the Akalis for their unwarrantable interference in State affairs. The inhabitants should not however be permitted to employ more forcible methods of preventing the advance of the jatha and should be instructed to permit the entry of the jatha should their protest be unavailing. No Akalis should be allowed admittance into the Gurudwara.

(1) If they remained strictly non-violent they should be disposed of in the manner which has up to the present been adopted. They should be deported in small batches (of 100 or less) to Bawal and there released. For this purpose Mr. Wilson Johnston has obtained the loan of prison vans from the Agent, North Western Railway.

Sir Malcolm Hailey emphasised the fact that this method of treatment has, up to the present, been found to be very efficacious in preventing political consequences of an undesirable nature.

No sympathy has been aroused in political circles such as might be expected if harsher methods were used and the public lost interest in the affair.

(2) If however the Akalis showed a disposition to break their vow of non-violence and to resist arrest or to employ forcible methods of entry into the Gurudwara the Administrator should declare the jatha an illegal assembly. The Granth Sahib should be "cut out" and removed with due respect to the Gurudwara. The ringleaders should be arrested and in the last resort force should be used, gun fire being employed if necessary to restore order.

Detailed

Detailed directions have already been issued by the Government of India as to the methods to be adopted if fire has to be opened. These directions should be strictly adhered to.

It was agreed that the arrangements made for dealing with this particular jatha would not necessarily hold good if further jathas of similar dimensions attempt to enter Jaito after the present jatha is disposed of.

Mr. Wilson Johnston laid before the meeting a letter received from the Patiala Darbar making a spontaneous offer of assistance to the Nabha State. It was decided that this offer might with advantage be accepted. A small body of troops being asked for to be present at Jaito.

It was considered that if Patiala ranged itself alongside its sister State at this crisis the effect would be good. It has been held at a previous stage of the case that the presence of Patiala troops in Nabha was undesirable but circumstances have changed and there are now positive advantages in bringing home to the Sikh extremists that all the Sikh States are united in their opposition to the Akali menace.

Notice to Jatha.

The authorities of Nabha State having reason to believe that your jatha is desirous of holding an "Akandpath" at the Gangsar Gurudwara at Jaito, in accordance with the policy, hitherto followed, not to refuse entry to the Gurudwara for purely religious purposes hereby given notice that no more than 50 members of your jatha will be allowed entry to the Gurudwara to carry out an "Akandpath" upon a written agreement being given :-

(1) that remainder of the jatha leaves State territory immediately after the execution of the agreement.

(2) that the ceremony will be purely religious and that no mention will be made of any political matter

(3) that on the termination of the "Akandpath" the men (not more than 50 in number) who have been admitted to the Gurudwara will forthwith leave State territory.

Information has been received that an Akali jatha numbering about 500 has left Amritsar with the ostensible object of holding an "Akandpath" at the Gangsar Gurudwara at Jaito in Nabha State. Previous jathas that have come to Jaito have been informed that, if their object is a purely religious one, they would be allowed to visit the Gurudwara, but that on no account would permission be given for the Gurudwara to be used for the purpose of political propaganda. In accordance with this policy the State authorities are giving notice to the jatha that not more than 50 of its members will be permitted to visit the Gurudwara for the purpose of holding an "Akandpath" on an undertaking being given that on the conclusion of the same they depart from the State forthwith and that during their stay in the State no political speeches are made or meetings held.

Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press 27-7-1922—2,000.

CONFIDENTIAL.

9

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

HOME DEPARTMENT
Date
File No 20/2
Serial on File
Library No 661

No. 8444- S. B.

Dated Lahore, the 16th February 1924.

Subject.- Despatch of the Shahidi Jatha from Amritsar to Jaiton on the 10th February, 1924.

My dear Crerar

I am desired to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a report, dated the 11th February, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, on the above subject.

Yours sincerely,

H. D. Craik

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
DELHI.

(M.H).

P.S. Please show this report, which was unfortunately delayed in transit, to Thompson. A copy has gone to Wilson Johnston.

HDC

Copy of a D.O. letter dated the 11th February, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division, Lahore.

The Shahidi Jatha (this is the popular name for it) went off yesterday. Proceedings started with a Diwan at the Akal Takht at 8 A.M. The attendance is estimated to have been 15,000. After sundry speeches of the usual character Dr. Kitchlew and Pandit Dina Nath arrived about 11 and shortly afterwards the Jatha appeared with a band and joined the Diwan. Kitchlew and Dina Nath both spoke and congratulated the jatha and the Akalis in general on their non-violence. The Jathedar of the jatha then read a printed Hukamnama from the Akal Takht explaining that the jatha was going to restore the interrupted Akhand Path and exhorting them to non-violence. After this the five Piyares who formed the Granth Sahib's escort were presented with swords from the Akal Takht. Photos of the jatha and the diwan were taken from the Darshani Deorhi. On photo is said to have been a film. The Palki containing the Granth Sahib was brought out and garlanded and a Nirmala Sadhu read a printed poem and the jatha emerged from the Darbar Sahib about 3.15. The attendance at the Darbar Sahib and at the Clock Tower Chauk was probably about 30,000. It is noteworthy that none of the members of the Committee, who are known to be working in Amritsar, were seen.

2. The jatha proceeded through the city in the following formation:-

First came two men with Rohalkas which they used for creating a noise like a bomb. Afterwards came two batches of the Darbar Sahib Sewadars about 40 altogether. Then a party representing the Amritsar city Jatha followed by Dr. Kitchlew, Pandit Dina Nath and various others of the Congress party. Then came the Akali band, thirteen of them, in black. Then five Akali banners followed by two Nir[illegible]

Sadhus blowing their Narsingas. Then two Chobdars with silver coloured staffs and five Piyaras with naked swords; the Granth Sahib in a Palki carried by Nirmalas, and accompanied by Kartar Singh Granthi of the Darbar Sahib (lately in 47 Sikhs); two more Chobdars and six Nirmala Sadhus. Then came the Shahidi Jatha in platoons of 25, one Jathedar and six fours. The whole procession was brought up by an ambulance corps of eight, dressed in green.

3. On route the Jatha was joined by various Khilafatists and Congressmen. In Katra Karam Singh each member was given a pound of Mithai by the Kambohs. They reached the Chatiwind Gate about 6 p.m. and shortly afterwards the Hindus and Musalmans returned. At the Chatiwind bridge all the tamashabins were sent back. At this place the city Sikhs gave the jatha fruits etc. The jatha after taking tea at Gilwali was escorted into Chabba, the first halt, by hundred men with flares to a camp prepared before hand by Sewadars from Amritsar. They had 51 Sholdaris and a Shamiyana in which the Granth Sahib is placed. The transport is 30 carts at Rs. 3/- per cart plus fodder for the bullocks and the cart men. There was a short service and a religious diwan in the evening and the jatha was fed at Chabba Gurdwara.

4. The next morning there was a diwan at 5 o'clock and at 8.30 a bugle blew for striking tents and getting ready. At 9 the jatha accompanied by the band went off and fed at the Gurdwara. In the meanwhile the Sewadars packed up the tents and loaded the transport. At 10 the jatha returned to camp and indulged in religious exercises, each platoon under its jathedar. In the meanwhile the Sewadars took their food. At 11 the jatha moved off in the same formation as they left the city the day before.

5. It seems likely that the jatha will be accompanied during most of its progress by several thousand tamashbins. A tremendous amount of interest has been excited. People are coming from miles to see the Jatha and some of them even take up the dust over which the jatha has passed and smear over their faces. It does not appear that the other communities are any more sympathatic than ey were; but there is little doubt that by this show, which has

been extra-ordinarily well stage-managed, the S.G.P.C. have succeeded in impressing on non-Akali Sikhs that this is a purely religious pilgrimage, the only object of which is to re-start the Akhand Path which the Government have stopped. It looks as if the journey of the jatha to Jaitoo will be of the nature of a triumphal procession. This of course makes it a great deal more difficult to deal with. Whether a second jatha is sent or not, depends, I am told, on what happens to this one. Public opinion predicts a victory for the jatha. The treatment of the Granth Sahib and its personal escort will want very careful thinking out. It might be possible to let the Granth Sahib through while stopping the rest of the jatha.

6. The jatha is composed of a hundred men from Amritsar, 30 from Lahore and the rest from various other districts. They are not the regular hangers on of the Darbar Sahib. They are said to be mostly Jats and are probably genuine fanatics. As far as possible people have been chosen for the jatha who were formerly convicted over the Guru-ka-Bagh affair. I am told that bad characters have been fairly systematically excluded. I should be surprised if the jatha breaks its vow of non-violence under any provocation.

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1872.

Hon Mr Thompson

Hon. W2 K/2 (SIT)

D.O.No. Camp/ 02.

Office of the Administrator,
Nabha State, Camp Jaito.
February 19, 1924.

My dear Minchin,

I returned to Jaito yesterday, and Muirhead and myself have been going into all arrangements with the local officers this morning. The Akali Infantry are here and the Gurkhas and Cavalry arrive this afternoon. I have not yet heard when the Patiala Detachment arrives.

We have arranged to handle the situation in so far as it is possible by the villagers, 1600 of whom have volunteered their services to eject this Shahi Jatha.

On Sunday L.Nathu Ram, our Chief Police Officer, who came here from Sargodha, received a visit from Sirdar Bahadur Kartar Singh of Sargodha, a cousin of Mehtab Singh. Kartar Singh has been a supporter of Government, and was rewarded for his good work in the New Year's Honour List by a title, the recommendation for which had been made by L. Nathu Ram. He accordingly came to thank him for what he had done on his behalf. He stated that from his knowledge of the Akali matters he was of the opinion that the Akali movement was in a very bad way, that all prominent leaders were now under arrest and that the movement was kept going solely by the access which the general public have to the Akali leaders whoare in trial at Amritsar.

He stated that all orders to the general mass of Akalis issue from these leaders, who are allowed to receive visitors in jail, and that their general instructions are to give a religious tinge to every political matter so as to try and involve Government on the religious side. It is with this object that the present Shahi Jatha is bringing a Granth Sahib with it. A considerable number of more religious Akalis asked that Granth Sahib should be omitted but they received the answer that this religioud book constituted

constituted at the same time their only safe-guard against officialdome and their chief instrument of attack upon Government. They hope that in this way some incident may arise which will give them an opportunity of saying that Government has insulted the Granth Sahib. This has been instigated by these Akali leaders.

If all access to these leaders was denied Kartar Singh was strongly of opinion that the movement would collapse. He further gave as his opinion that there was no immediate prospect of any jatha following this one. It is possible that endeavours will be made to send a second jatha on the first of Baisakh which corresponds to the 12th of April.

As Kartar Singh has opportunities of gauging the Akali ideas which we are not in possession of, it seems to me that his views are worthy of consideration.

Yours sincerely,

SD/- J. WILSON-JOHNSTON.

Lt.Col. A.B. Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,
Agent to the Governor General Punjab States,
Lahore.

To Home Department for information.

SD/- G.D.OGILVIE, 21-2-24.

Hon'ble Mr. Crerar.

It would be as well to let the Punjab Government know that suggestions have been made that Akali leaders under trial are able to maintain communication and to give directions to outside members of the Akali movement. Under-trial prisoners are of course under fewer restrictions than convicts with regard to interviews. The Jail Manuals prescribe that under-trial prisoners should be allowed under proper restrictions to interview and communicate with their friends and legal advisers in order to arrange for conduct of their defence or to provide for the management of their property. An under-trial prisoner may, if he desires, consult his pleader or friend out of hearing but not out of sight of the prison officials; but he should be searched at the close of any interview. Letters and correspondence of under-trial prisoners are subject to the same scrutiny as those of convicts. It is within the discretion of the Superintendent to refuse to allow an interview between an under-trial prisoner and any person who may attend at the prison for the purpose of seeing and conversing with such under-trial prisoners. These rules are adequate to prevent any under-trial prisoners from abbusing these privileges in the way suggested and when privileges are abused they may be withdrawn.

SD/- J.Crerar. 22-2-24.

H.M.

SD/- W.M.H(ailey)
22-2-24.

Draft D.O. to Chief Commissioner Punjab but verify by references which are from the Bombay Jail Manual by

ø ch. XXXIX para 995.

x ch.XVI paras 551 to 560.

x Comparison with the Punjab Manual.

SD/- J.CRERAR, 22-2-24.

Comparison shows that the rules for interviews of under-trial prisoners in the Punjab are practically the same as those in force in Bombay. A draft D.O. letter to Punjab is accordingly, submitted.

J.McD.
25-2-24.

SD/- C.W.GWYNNE, 26-2-24.

SECRETARY.

As redrafted.

SD/- J.CRERAR. 26-2-24.

18

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22.2.24

POSTS TELEGRAPHS.

PRESS TELEGRAM.

DELHI,
G. T. O.
22nd Feb 1924.

INDIAN NEWS AGENCY TELEGRAM.

---:O:---

No 37(D).

Delhi, 22nd February 1924. Time 11/30 hours.

Communique. The recent order issued by the Administrator of Nabha State regarding conditions of admission to the Gurdwara at Jaito has been disregarded by the Akalis in spite of frequent intimations and the Jatha of 500 left Bargari in Faridkot State shortly after noon yesterday and advanced on Jaito screened by a body of some 6,000 other Akalis who moved on six hundred yards front in great depth armed with lathis, chavis, spears and firearms. The Administrator with five State officials advanced about hundred yards to meet the Akalis, gave them full warning and called on them to halt and explained that if they did not comply with order he would be compelled to open fire. This warning was utterly disregarded by Akalis who hotly pursued the Administrator and his party. At this point a Nabha villager received a wound from a bullet fired by the Akalis. Administrator gave order to fire three rounds buck-shot at leaders who were within few yards. Line of Akalis then swerved to their right where platoon of Nabha Infantry was in position. Order to fire three rounds controlled fire with service ammunition was given by the Administrator. Akalis and Jatha then made for a small outlying Gurdwara called Tibi Sahib and one squadron cavalry moved over to try and head them off. The Akalis at this moment increased their fire and delivered determined attack led by a mounted Akali who gave orders in English to his comrades to charge. Fire from ten dismounted cavalry checked the Akalis but Jatha advanced under Tibbi Sahib whilst about two thousand Akalis swarmed into Tibi Sahib Gurdwara. The remainder were already moving off and the party of 2,000 gradually broke up leaving only about hundred who are now under arrest at Jaito. Medical assistance was promptly rendered to the wounded. After the firing Dr. Kitchlew and Professor Gidwani arrived on the scene in motor and were taken into custody. Total casualties so far ascertained are fourteen dead and thirtyfour wounded. The Jatha itself was not fired on and no member of it was injured. Great care was taken not to interfere with Granth Sahib, which has been deposited with due respect in the Dharamsala. Special enquiry by Magistrate has been ordered.

19 915

Comp.

Tel. to Secy. of State No. 233 (Pol)
dy 22.2.24

Send a copy of this
to the S. of S.
telegram
to F. + P. Dept. &
info.

J. Crewe
22/2

Secret
23/2/24

Hon. has observed.
Issue & send copy to
Exp. Dept.
J. Crerar
23/2

23/2/24.

Tele. fr. Punjab No. D. 70 G. dt 23.2.24
from Mr. Ghulab Singh M.L.A.
dt 23.2.1924
for information
Hon. Sec.
25.2.24

Comp. 2

Encl I

Secy:

Encl. II

Secy: from the Govt Punjab no. — dt 24/1/24
for information.
24/2/24

Hon.

I have telephoned to Mr Thomson that he should have copy
Sec. 24/2
send copy to Mr Thompson
& return.
J. Crerar
25/2

Punjab Civil Secretariat,
Lahore, dated 24.2.1924.

My dear Crerar,

I am desired to enclose a paraphrase of my telegram of today despatched in reply to your telegram No.D709-Pol. of yesterday.

2. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, who was in Lahore today, reported that the excitement in Amritsar over the Jaiton affair is on the whole rather less than he had anticipated. "Diwans" were held in the Golden Temple on the 22nd as soon as the news was received and efforts were then made, and are being continued, to raise a second "jatha" to be despatched to Jaiton. On the 22nd, however, there did not appear to be any great keenness to enlist in this "jatha", but there is little doubt that a "jatha" will eventually be raised. Some hundreds of Akalis from out-stations went to Amritsar yesterday and information from the most reliable source available is to the effect that a "jatha" of 500 will be despatched on the 28th by road to Jaiton, where it should arrive on the 14th March. The route will probably be somewhat different from the last and will include a portion of the Lahore district.

3. The Governor in Council has given the most careful consideration to the question whether this second "jatha" be dealt with in British India or allowed to arrive at Jaiton and has come to the conclusion that the balance of advantage is decidedly in favour of the latter course. His reasons may be summarised as follows :-

(a) Assuming that the second "jatha" behaves on the march in the same way as the first (i.e. that no political speeches are made and that the daily "diwans" are confined to hymns and prayers) it is doubtful whether there would be ol legal ground for either arresting or dispersing it. In any case such arrest or dispersal would be represented as an interference with a purely religious procession. It can

said for certain until the "jatha" arrives at its destination whether it will use force or not.

(b) If the "jatha" has to be forcibly dispersed, previous experience makes it likely that politicians and propaganda agents from all over India will immediately proceed to the spot. Such people can be prevented by executive order from entering State territory, but it will be exceedingly difficult, if not practically impossible, to control their activities in British India.

(c) If the dispersal or arrests take place in a Native State, no occasion for debate can arise either in the central or local Legislature.

(d) The trial of arrested offenders could be more rapidly carried out in Nabha territory than in British India, where the presence of counsel, appeals, and applications for revision might prolong proceedings indefinitely.

(e) As the venue of a "morcha", Jaiton is far less accessible and far more expensive for the Akalis than any place near Amritsar.

(f) It is desirable that the attitude of Government in regard to the second "jatha" should be consistent with its attitude in regard to the first.

4. In deciding to recommend to the Government of India that the second "jatha" should be allowed to proceed to Jaiton, the Governor in Council has not overlooked the fact that its march through two or possibly three British districts will add to the unhealthy excitement caused by the march of the first "jatha". If, however, this excitement is to be prevented, it would be necessary to deal with the "jatha" close to Amritsar, and as already pointed out this would provide an opportunity for a "morcha" at a venue most convenient to the Akalis themselves.

5. Minchin, who attended a conference summoned by His Excellency this morning, laid stress on the difficulty of dealing with the second "jatha" at Jaiton before the large

number of prisoners under arrest there had been disposed of. He was, however, informed that the Punjab Government are prepared to place at his disposal a number of magistrates sufficient to ensure the rapid disposal of the criminal cases now under investigation.

6. The Governor in Council is definitely opposed to the proposal made in your telegram of yesterday that an announcement should be made by the Nabha authorities that for some definite period the use of the Jaiton gurdwara will be restricted to the residents of the State. He considers that such an announcement would be interpreted by the Sikh public generally, even the well-disposed classes as an interference with religious practice and he is of opinion that such an announcement, so far from preventing the despatch of another "jatha", would tend to encourage it. He understands that this view is shared by the Agent to the Governor General.

7. As regards the treatment of the second "jatha" on arrival at Jaiton, the Governor in Council considers it essential that the conditions under which entry to the gurdwara will be permitted should be such as to make it clear to the Sikhs at large that there is no intention on

on the part of the State authorities to interfere with the exercise of a religious right. He does not suggest any modification of the conditions prohibiting the making of political speeches or an indefinite stay in State territory, but he considers it desirable that, subject to these conditions, as little restriction as possible should be placed on actual entry into the Gurdwara. With this object he suggests that the Administrator should, if practicable, appoint a small committee of influential Sikh residents of Nabha State to regulate actual admission into the gurdwara from time to time of such numbers as may be found feasible. The point is that several quite well-disposed and loyal Sikhs have taken the view, both before and after the events of the 21st of February, that the authorities made a mistake in fixing a rigid limit to the number to be admitted into the gurdwara.

8. You will, of course, realize that it is of great importance that this Government should be informed as soon as possible of the decision of the Government of India regarding the treatment of the the second "Jatha". If the Government of India do not feel able to accept the recommendation of the Governor in Council and decide that the "Jatha" must be dealt with in the Punjab, it will be necessary to make extensive military preparations beforehand.

Yours sincerely,

SD/- H.D.CRAIK.

To

The Hon. Mr. J.Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Government of India
Home Department. Delhi.

25

25/6/24

Telegram P.

To The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Deptt.

CLEAR THE LINE. In reply to your telegram D 709 Poll., dated 23rd of February the Punjab Government consider that it is too early at present to tell the effect of the Jaiton incident on the Punjab generally. In Amritsar there is considerable excitement, which is, however, confined to the Golden Temple, where Akalis are gathering from outside districts. The best information available indicates that a second "Jatha" of 500 men will leave Amritsar on 28th, arriving at Jaiton on March the 14th, by a slightly different route from that previously taken. Owing to legal and other objections to making arrests or dispersing the "jatha" in British territory, this Government are strongly of opinion that the "jatha" should be dealt with on arrival at Jaiton. The proposed restriction of access to the gurdwara to residents of the Nabha State is not supported by the Punjab Government who consider that the conditions of entry should be such as to make it clear to the Sikh public that there is no intention to interfere with their religion. The imposition of a restriction on numbers would be regarded as interference. The Punjab Government recommend that the Administrator should appoint a small Sikh Committee to regulate admissions to the gurdwara, which should be by 50 at a time or such other number as may be found feasible. Letter follows giving further details.

Confidential.

Punjab States Agency.
D.O.No. 1 X-R.
N-4/22

Dated Lahore, the 24th February 1924.

My dear Thompson,

Please refer to Crerar's confidential telegram No. D/709 Pol., dated the 23rd February, to the Panjab Government regarding the Sikh situation.

There was a conference at Government House here this morning, which I attended. It was decided that the Panjab Government should not interfere with the new jatha of 500 Akalis, which is expected to leave Amritsar on the 28th instant and reach Jaiton on the 14th March. The Panjab officers appear to think that it would be difficult to interfere with the jatha from a legal point of view and that it would be better to allow it to march to Jaiton.

The concensus of opinion, with which I entirely agree, was that it would be wrong to place any restriction on admission to the Jaiton Gurdwara other than that already imposed, namely that those who wish to enter the Gurdwara should come in an orderly and peaceful manner for religious purposes only and that in the interests of good order and sanitation there should be no crowding at the Gurdwara itself, but that those wishing to attend the Akhand path should be admitted 50 at a time, which is the most that could conveniently be accommodated in the Gurdwara. Sir John Maynard was anxious that it should be made clear to the ordinary villagers that there is no intention on the part of Government to interfere with any religious observances and that the conditions imposed regarding access to the Gangsar Gurdwara are intended

merely to prevent political or seditious speeches and discussions and to ensure orderliness and sanitation.

Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia was strongly in favour of absolutely free access to the Gurdwara. He said that no Sikh would agree to any restriction on his religious observances and that however large an assembly of Akalis there might be at Jaiton they should not be interfered with, but merely told that they were expected to leave the Gurdwara after reasonable time. When asked how he proposed to deal with a mass of Akalis, who refused to leave, he replied that it would be easy to cut off their provisions and that a Sikh would never allow himself to starve to death, as this was against his religion. When asked how it would be possible to provide for the sanitation of an undisciplined horde of Akalis, who might number tens of thousands, he replied that there should a Committee of Sikh Sardars, who would arrange for this. Little difficulties, such as the provision of a huge sweeper establishment that would be necessary for such a gathering, he waived aside. In fact, his attitude was purely intransigent.

Talking the matter over afterwards with Langley, Puckle and Emerson, who are most in touch with rural Sikh opinion, they thought that the Sikhs would not agree to any restrictions, and that their object was to force Government to permit complete and unrestricted access to the Gurdwara at their own will. They considered that if the Akalis gained another victory at Jaiton, they would then proceed to start a morcha at Nabha and other places and that there would be no end to their truculence and inordinate demands. In fact their opinion was that a crisis had arrived and that it was absolutely essential to show the Sikhs that

they could not have their own way as they have been doing in the past, and they thought that rapid developments might probably be expected during the next three ~~xxxxxx~~ weeks.

As the Panjab Government are unwilling to deal with the next jatha, it will be necessary to make arrangements to dispose of it at Jaiton and I fear that a repetition may be expected of what happened on the 21st instant. It is obviously necessary to get rid of the prisoners, who are now in custody at Jaiton before the 14th March. Wilson Johnston wishes to prosecute the whole of the Shahidi Jatha and the other Akalis, who are in custody, as there is evidence to show that the Shahidi Jatha brought fire-arms with them in their transport carts for distribution to the Durli Jatha just before arriving at Jaiton, whilst there is also evidence to show that the Ferozepur Akalis, who attacked the troops, were well provided with fire-arms. Wilson Johnston's idea, with which I fully agree, is that if the Shahidi Jatha is allowed to go, its members will be used with great effect for propaganda purposes throughout the Panjab and that it would be a great political mistake to allow this. I agree fully therefore in his opinion that all the prisoners now in custody should be prosecuted. For this purpose several Magistrates with their staffs will be required and the Panjab Government have promised to provide them. An extra force of police will also probably be necessary. I am asking Wilson Johnston for his views on the whole subject and will write to you again when I receive them.

One danger is that jathas from all parts of the country may proceed to Jaiton on their own initiative. To deal with such bands it will be necessary to have troops and police continually on duty, and if the process is prolonged the force now at Jaiton may not be sufficient for the purpose. I should be glad to know whether in the

event

event of extra troops being necessary, the Government of India would be prepared to provide them, or whether there would be any objection to my asking the Maharaja of Patiala to increase the body of 150 infantry, which have already been placed at the Administrator's disposal. His Highness informed Wilson Johnston a few days ago that he was heart and soul with Government in this matter and that if necessary he was prepared to supply any assistance, whether it took the fomm of 20,000 villagers, or troops.

I should be obliged if you would let me have the views of Government as soon as possible regarding the following proposals :-

(1) that the members of the Shahidi Jatha and other Akalis at Jaiton should be prosecuted as proposed by Wilson Johnston ,

(2) that the next jatha should be allowed to march unmolested through the Panjab and dealt with at Jaiton,

(3) that the conditions already prescribed to regulate access to the Gangsar Gurdwara should be maintained,

(4) that Patiala should be asked, if necessary, to supply extra troops,

If sanction is accorded to the first three of these proposals, it will be necessary to empty Jaiton of xxx prisoners as soon as possible. The best course will probably be to take them to Nabha and confine them in a barbed wire enclosure there so as to have the pens ready for the reception, if necessary, of the next jatha and its auxiliaries. The difficulty about this last proposal is, that the Administrator will have to stay at Jaiton and that there will be no body at Nabha to supervise the trial of the prisoners and the arrangements for their disposal there. If found guilty , the convicts

would

would have to be accommodated in a Panjab jail, as the jail at Nabha can only contain 300 prisoners and is already fairly full.

x x x x

x x x x

Yours sincerely,
Sd. A.B.Minchin.

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J.P.Thompson, C.S.I.,
Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

(1) that the same policy be pursued in regard to the second jatha as was followed in regard to the first

(2) that the decision as to the number of persons to be prosecuted be deferred pending receipt of the Magistrate's report.

Sd. Reading,

Viceroy and Governor General of India.

Monday
February 25th.

32
28

D.O. No. Camp/09

Office of the Administrator,
Nabha State,
Camp Jaitu,
Feb. 25, 1924

My dear Minchin,

I wired you and the Govt. of India to-day to the effect that Muirhead and I discovered this morning for the first time that a small party of Gurkhas did fire on the 21st. The mistake arose as follows :-

I had told Bell Kingsley that I thought that the platoon of Gurkhas on the immediate left of the road had fired, he said that he did not think they had but would enquire, this he did and reported that they had not fired nor had the other platoon on the left of the road. When you were drafting the report in the evening Muirhead asked him once more about the Gurkhas having fired. Kingsley understood the question to refer as mine had to those on the left of the road and replied that he had counted ammunition and had made sure that none had fired. He was under the impression that we knew that his section on the right of the road had fired, this Muirhead and I were unaware of as was quite natural in the noise and action of the mêlée. We were both therefore under the impression that the Gurkhas had not been in action and no further reference was made to Bell Kingsley. It was not till this morning that the latter discovered that Muirhead and I were unaware that his section had fired. I much regret the mistake and hasten to make matters clear at once. I enclose a copy of Bell Kingsley's and Muirhead's reports and have also sent copies

to the Government of India with a copy of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

J. Thompson

Col. A. B. Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,
Agent to the Governor General,
Punjab States,
Lahore.

Two copies forwarded the Hon'ble Mr. J. P. Thompson C.S.
Political Secretary to Govt of India in continuation of my
Endn of today's date.

J. Thompson
25.2.24

SECRET No..... JAITO
25/2/24

34

SITUATION REPORT

With reference to my reports No.J.11.d/22/2/24 and J.16.d/23/2/24 I attach a copy of a letter addressed to me by Major Bell.Kingsley cmdg Detachment 1/4th Gurkha Rifles.From this it will appear that the Gurkhas did actually fire 35 rounds in the circumstances therein described.Immediatly after I had returned from following up the Akalis,I saw Major Bell.Kingsley and asked him if his Detachment had been compelled to fire. He was very busy at the time but my impression was that a few rounds had been fired,but as yet full reports had not been received.

Later on at 8.30 p.m. when Col.Minchin was making up his report to the Government of India,I called in Major Bell.Kingsley to ascertain whether rounds had been fired or not.Major Bell.Kingsley,it is apparent, understood that the question only referred to his two platoons on the left,as there appeared to be doubt as to whether a man on the extreme left had fired,and replied in the negative.I understood his reply to refer to the Gurkha Detachment in general,took this as final and reported accordingly in my situation reports.

I regret very much that my previous reports were incorrect due to the above misunderstanding.The mistake did not come to notice before I,being under the impression that the Gurkhas ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ had not been compelled to open fire,did not discuss their dispositions further with Major Bell.Kingsley. The latter Officer came to me this morning and informed me that after retiring last night it had struck him for the first time that I had not realized that a section of his Regt had fired on the 21st. Major Bell Kingsley was under the impression that he had reported the matter to me and therefore did not refer to it again.

The Magisterial enquiry is proceeding.

The situation is normal.

J.R. Minchin
Lt,Col,
Commanding Troops JAITO

COPIES TO:-
Chief of the General Staff.
Northern Command.
Lahore District
Ambala Brigade Area.
Administrator,NABHA.

NO.CS/3/Detachment JAITO.
25/2/24.

35

O.C.Troops
Jaito.

night when I had gone to bed after talking over the events of with Col Gregson, S.P. FEROZEPORE, it dawned upon me that it was known to you that I had ordered some of my men to fire. In order there may be no doubt in the matter, I wish to state that 35 s were fired by my orders in the following circumstances.
bout 2.45 you ordered me to move my detachment forward about 300 ent back and moved the detachment forward and placed 2 platoons ind mounds on the left of the BARGARI-JAITO road and 4 platoons ind mounds on the right of that road and in alignment with the other two. Shortly afterwards I heard firing in front but did not see its effect. I rode over towards the Tibbi Sahib Hill and asked you if I should move some of my detachment over towards the left as I saw that a mass of Akalis was advancing towards that hill. You told me to do so and I ordered the two platoons in reserve on the left of the BARGARI-JAITO road to move over to their left. I rode back to the 4 platoons on the right of the BARGARI-JAITO road and ordered 1 platoon to move across to a mound on the left of that road. A few moments later a bullet struck the ground about 20 yds to my left front (I was now standing on the edge of the BARGARI-JAITO road) and ricochetted over me and two or three more bullets whined overhead. I felt certain that these bullets came from the ranks of the Akalis and that my men were being fired at, and also seeing this mass of Akalis at the same time streaming across to the Tibbi Sahib Hill and turning my left flank, I ordered 5 rounds of fire by the party of 12 men under my hand on the mound on the immediate right of the road. I stopped the fire by whistle blast and no more rounds were fired. Now, seeing the two platoons which I had originally moved over towards the Tibbi Sahib Hill falling back from the grove at its S.E. corner, I withdrew the remainder of the detachment to the northern edge of Jaito village in company with them, soas to have my whole detachment under my hand. A few minutes after arriving at the north edge of Jaito village, I received your orders to withdraw my detachment to camp and did so. I was under the impression that I had reported the fact to you on the evening of the 21st that fire had been opened by me. Subsequently about 8.30 p.m. when Col. MACNIE was writing his report and I was called in and asked whether the Gurkhas had fired or not, I replied in the negative as I understood that the question only referred to the action of the two platoons on the extreme left. My reason for thinking this was, that during conversation earlier in the afternoon, there seemed to be a doubt as to whether a man of my detachment on the extreme left had fired or not. I made enquiries and found that no firing had taken place there.
I much regret that I did not make this point perfectly clear to you.

H.B. Gregsley Major.
1/4th Gurkha Rifles

36

The General Staff Officer asked me to send the following message to Hon'ble Member at once. The message is as follows:-

"We wired to the Officer Commanding troops Jaito as to whether automatic weapons had been used by any troops either State or regular at Jaito.

He replies:-

All troops, including State forces, were under my command. Actual order to fire to police and State platoon was given by Administrator personally.

No troops, either regular or State, employed automatic weapons."

25-2-24

H. M.

Returned from Dpt
Order
26/2

DELHI,
G. T. O.
26th Feb 1924.

7
33

37

INDIAN NEWS AGENCY TELEGRAM.

----:O:----

No 44(D).

Delhi, 26th February 1924. Time 1/25 hours.

Calcutta, 25th. Information been received that Mr. W. J. Good, Officiating Secretary to Calcutta Port Commissioners was shot dead near Bhimtal (Kumaon Hills) in Nainital District.

Later. A Lucknow message states that Mr. Good was on a shooting excursion in submontane forests some twenty miles from Nainital where it is alleged he was accidentally hit by a stray bullet from the gun of an Indian Shikari. Superintendent of Nainital Police has proceeded to spot. Authentic details are yet lacking.

Poona, 25th. It is understood that as a result of conversations between Pandit Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpatrai and Mr. Gandhi, there would be no change for the present in programme of Swaraj Party in Legislative Assembly.

Staff Sergeant J. A. Pearston who was sentenced to death for murder of Miss May Esther Ingham was hanged at Yerowda Central Prison this morning.

Mr. Gandhi and Lala Lajpatrai have sent separate messages to Akalis requesting Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee to postpone sending of further Jathas to Jaito till National leaders have had time to consider whole matter and decided on the advice they should give the Akalis.

Mr. Gandhi in course of his message states "Without full facts before me, I am unable to say whether the march of a large number of men in order to pay devotion to the shrine at Gangasar at Jaito was or was not justified. But, I would ask the Akali Sikhs not to send any more Jatha without further deliberation and consultation with those leaders outside Sikhs community who have hitherto been giving them advice. It would be well to stop and watch developments arising out of the tragedy. One of telegrams received by me tell me that the Jatha was and remained throughout strictly non-violent. You have from the very outset claimed that your movement is perfectly non-violent and religious. I would like every one of us to understand all the implications of nonviolence".

Lucknow, 25th. Understood that in presenting Provincial Budget before Legislative Council tomorrow Finance Member will recommend continuation of three taxation Acts, viz., Court Fees Amendment Act, Amended Stamp Act and Motor Vehicles Taxation Act for a further period of one year. When these fresh taxation proposals were made last year it was stated on behalf of Government that these Acts would remain only for a year to help to make up deficit, Inspite of the fact that this years Budget has a surplus of 15 lakhs 24 thousand, it is understood Government favours retention of these taxes in order to balence budget of 1922-23.

Bombay, 25th. Strike situation remains unchanged. At meeting of Strikers yesterday resolution was passed demanding nomination of two mill-workers to Strike enquiry Committee. After the meeting strikers created troubles by throwing brickbats at Presidential dias and press galleries. This morning situation was more peaceful except for a demonstration before Bomanji Mills, Mahaluxmi where strikers were demanding that oilman and other mechanics should be turned out. Police dispersed strikers.

Amritsar, 25th. Rai Sahib Amarnath first class Magistrate been recalled from leave and ordered to proceed to Jaito.

38 38

Would Sec? Kindly explain in
Faith Till? Yrs
26/2

Do so.
J. Lucas
2/3.

Mr. MacDermott

In M. Harley

The report confirms all we have heard before - No contradictory evidence was given -

D.T. 25/3

SECRET No J.11 of 22-2-24

REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN REGARDING SHAHEDI JATHA AND OTHER AKALIS AT JAITO ON FEB: 21st 1924.

Ref Map 44 - 1 inch to 1 mile
15

GENERAL STAFF 39
23 FEB 192
647(c)

In amplification of my cipher wire No: J.8. of 21st Feb, the following occurred.

From information received by the Civil Authorities it was anticipated that the Shahedi Jatha 500 strong would reach Jaito on the 21st Feb moving from the North-North-East via the BARGARI-JAITO road. It was probable that 200-300- other Akalis would be in attendance. Arrangements were therefore made by the Administrator Nabha to close in the sides of a small stretch of the road 800 yards North of Jaito village (about the W of ALKWALA on map) with barbed wire and thorn hedge. The plan was to cut off the procession into parties of 100 approximately and then to remove them in carts, all due deference being paid to the Granth Sahib, for which special arrangements were made. The above operation was to be carried out by the villagers assisted by police, the troops being kept well in the background.

The initial dispositions of the troops to fulfil this purpose were:-

1 Squadron Skinner's Horse South of Tibbi Sahib which is triangle just West of ALKWALA on map.

3 Platoons Akal Infantry behind some mounds South of first L of ALKWALA

2 Coys 1/4th Gurkhas standing to as reserve in camp West of Fort (less 1 Platoon in Fort).

At the Gurudwara, which is just South of the P in PS just West of Fort and which was the main objective of the SHAHEDI JATHA AKALIS, were 100 Patiala Infantry & 50 Nabha Infantry. 50 Patiala Infantry were posted at Railway Station.

About 1600 hundred villagers were assembled in groups with picked leaders & posted on each side of the road about the W of ALKWALA, whilst more villagers were at the Gurudwara.

The Jatha was expected at 1 to 2 p.m. and troops and villagers were in position at 12 noon.

Information comimg in from time to time indicated that the Jatha had been largely reinforced and at 1.45.p.m. the attendant Akalis were estimated to be about 3000. It then became evident that the plan for using villagers alone would require to be modified & these were withdrawn a little more to the South, 20 Police and 25 Akal Infantry being lined astride the road about the W of ALKWALA. The 2 coys 1/4th Gurkhas (less 1 Platoon in Fort) were moved up to a position just North of Jaito village.

At 2.45.p.m. the Akalis came into view advancing from the North in a dense mass on a front of about 600 yards, armed with lathis, chavis, spears & firearms and screening the SHAHEDI JATHA. The administrator with some 5 officials advanced 100 yards to meet the line of Akalis who were coming on with their lathis chavis and spears raised. The Administrator called on the Akalis to halt and explained that failure to comply would necessitate orders to fire. The order to halt was utterly disregarded & the Administrator & Officials had to double back hotly pursued.

The Administrator reached the Firing Party & ordered the police to open fire with buckshot at ringleaders who were 6 yards away.

At this stage some fire was opened from the Akali ranks, bullets passing close to the Administrator & several Officials, one villager being wounded. The mass of Akalis then swerved to their right, still advancing, The Administrator gave the detachment of 25 of the Nabha Infantry orders to fire 3 rounds controlled fire.

In the meantime I had had the cavalry brought over to the road to be more centrally placed. On seeing that the mass of the Akalis was heading for the TIBBI SAHIB Hill. I personally took the Squadron across to endeavour to check the advancing mob by heading them off with mounted men. I sent Major Lorimer with 1 troop to the TIBBI SAHIB HILL. All my efforts to stop the Akalis were of no avail. I sounded a trumpet & warned them that fire might be opened. They were advancing in a dense mass led by a horseman with drawn sword who kept on shouting "CHARGE". During this period some fire came from the Akali ranks. The mass of about 3000 charged up the hill. Major Lorimer opened with a short burst of controlled fire with 10 men whom he had dismounted. On the Akalis temporarily falter-

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In addition, Dr. KITCHLEW, the Amritsar & Khilafat Agitator, a
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I am of opinion that the force I have here at present is qu
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J. Shewchenko

Lieut. Colon
Commanding Troops JAITO.

Copies to: Chief of the General Staff. ✓
Northern Command.
Lahore District.
Ambala brigade Area.
Administrator, Nabha.

150

SECRET No F. 11 D/22-2-24

REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN REGARDING SHAHEDI JATHA AND OTHER AKALIS AT JAITO ON FEB: 21st 1924.

Ref Map 44 J - 15 1 inch to 1 mile.

W.S.P. amc

GENERAL STAFF R.S. 39
23 FEB 1924
647 (c)

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From information received by the Civil Authorities it was anticipated that the Shahedi Jatha 500 strong would reach Jaito on the 21st Feb moving from the North-North-East via the BARGARI-JAITO road. It was probable that 200-300- other Akalis would be in attendance. Arrangements were therefore made by the Administrator Nabha to close in the sides of a small stretch of the road 800 yards North of Jaito village (about the W of ALKWALA on map) with barbed wire and thorn hedge. The plan was to cut off the procession into parties of 100 approximately and then to remove them in carts, all due deference being paid to the Granth Sahib, for which special arrangements were made. The above operation was to be carried out by the villagers assisted by police, the troops being kept well in the background.

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Copies to: Chief of the General, Staff. ✓
Northern Command.
Lahore District.
Ambala brigade Area.
Administrator, Nabha.

File No. 628(3)-P
D. No. 132-P(C)

P. 2622

425. C41

Telegram ------ R.

From ----- Administrator, Jaito.

Dated the 25th (7-55 p.m.)

February 1925.

Recd. the 25th (9- 35 p.m.)

Clear the line.

Your telegram No.424-S. Allegations in LAHORE utterly false. (1) Regarding whipping of women. No one, male or female, was whipped or lashed. Two women Kishan KAUR and TEJ KAUR were arrested on my orders, five others had to be taken into custody as they refused to leave male Akalis in spite of repeated efforts to persuade them to do so. Two of these subsequently asked to be allowed to go and were permitted to do so. (2) Regarding machine guns. There were no machine guns. Cavalry had Hotchkiss which were never taken off the horses. Gurkhas had Lewis guns which never had their magazines placed on them. (3) Regarding firing from Fort. Fort is some 400 yards from scene and no troops were posted there save one platoon of Gurkhas as guards. No firing from Fort took place. (4) No machine gun, Lewis gun or Hotchkiss gun was fired. (5) Regarding

2

So far from hindering attendance the doctor

asked if he had full medical appliances and on his reply that they had not as they were told to expect beating not firing, these were supplied from our military stores. No man attending the wounded was cudgeled.

File No. 628(3)-P
D. No. 13(-P(e)

P 2617

426.

43

Telegram ------ R.

From ----- dministrator, Jaito.

Dated the 25th (5-30 p.m.)

February 1925.

Recd. the 25th (6-10 p.m.)

It has been ascertained that Gurkhas fired 35 rounds on 21st. Written report follows.

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corp - Lapl Telegram from Punjab No. 8703 S.B. dt 26/2/24

44

For information

M.D.
27.2.24

V.B.

C. Sinyane
27.2.24

Secy. J. Creer
27/2/24

Tel. Tel. from Punjab No. 6166 dt 27.2.24

For information

M.D.
27.2.24

Sec: Copy to Ag. P. Dept.

J. Creer
27/2.

From Ag. Dept. for copies of correspondence with the Administration of Wakfs

Representation from certain Assembly Members

For information. The Ag. Dept. may be provided with a copy of the representation

M.D.
28/2/24

Secy. Some attached address-
-ledgement and on my
departure from Assembly
P.W.C. II tomorrow.

J. Creer
28/2

Done
28/2

Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press—17-2-1923—2,000.

SECRET. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No. 8444-F-S. B.

Dated Lahore, the 28th Feby 1924.

My dear Crerar

I am desired to enclose, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of the instructions sent today to the Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepore regarding the second Shahidi Jatha. Copies have been supplied to Minchin and Wilson-Johnston.

Will you please let Thompson see this?

Yours sincerely,

H D Craik

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
DELHI.

(M.H).

46

SECRET.

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No. 8444-F-S.B.

Dated Lahore, the 28th Feby., 1924.

My dear Coldstream,

The second "Shahidi jatha" of 500 is to start from Amritsar today and I enclose for your information a copy of its programme. It has been decided by the Government of India in consultation with this Government that the "jatha" is to be allowed to proceed to its destination and it is not to be either arrested or dispersed in British India. The Governor-in-Council has, however, decided that it should be preceded by a body of about 100 armed police and a squadron of Cavalry from Makhu (which will be the first halting place of the "jatha" after crossing the river). Arrangements are being made to concentrate this force at Makhu on the 4th of March, i.e. one day before the "jatha" is due to arrive there. The intention is that the Cavalry and Police should march one day ahead of the "jatha" as far as the Nabha border where it will halt till the jatha has been disposed of. Its primary object would be to discourage villagers and sympathizers of the "Jatha from joining in its march, and it is also probable that the knowledge that this armed force will be available to deal with fugitives in case there is a second affray at Jaiton should have a strong deterrent effect on Akalis, who might otherwise join in the demonstration at Jaiton.

2. His Excellency desires that you should accompany this force throughout its march and should do everything possible by means of proclamation, exhortation etc. to dissuade people from accompanying the "jatha" to Jaiton. To accomplish this object effectively, it is desirable that you should have with you a strong body of loyal and influential Sikhs and you should take this opportunity of impressing on Sikh jagirdars, Honorary Magistrates etc. that Government expects them to rally to its support at this juncture.

3. I may be able to give you later a vernacular

proclamation to distribute. Meanwhile the urgent thing is for you to arrange to be at Makhu on March the 4th and to be on tour for about a fortnight after that date. The squadron of Cavalry will probably come from Lahore. The Police will reach Ferozepore on the 2nd March and can be moved out to Makhu by train whenever convenient. They will bring shouldaris with them, but transport (for 100 officers and men) will be required from Makhu. Herdon will be in command.

4. Copies of this letter are being sent to the Government of India, Minchin, Wilson-Johnston and Townsend.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- H. D. Craik.

To

Lt. Col. J. C. Coldstream, O.B.E.,

Deputy Commissioner,

FEROZEPORE.

(M.H).

Programme of the second Shahidi Jatha.

Amritsar	.....	28th February.
Bahoru	.....	28th February.
Jhabal	.....	29th February.
Narsinghwala	.....	1st March.
Makhi Khurd	.....	2nd March.
Chima	.....	3rd March.
Nabipur	.....	4th March.
Makhu	.....	5th March.
Kot Isa Khan	.....	6th March.
Kosha Koela	.....	7th March.
Moga	.....	8th & 9th March.

The Jatha will stay and bathe at Moga.

Singhanwala	.....	10th March.
Bagha Purana	.....	11th March.
Koela	.....	12th March.
Besiyan Bhai Ka	.....	13th March.
Jaiton	.....	14th March.

Secret

No. 8444- F- S.B.

Punjab Civil Secretariat,

Lahore, dated 28. 2. 1924.

My dear Crerar,

In continuation of my letter No.8444-F-SB of yesterday, I am desired to enclose for the information of the Govt. of India copy of an extract from a report of the 26th of February ~~from the~~ by the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar.

2. This Government is broadcasting a vernacular proclamation pointing out (a) that the original "Akhand Path" was never stopped for a moment, and (b) that there is no absolute prohibition of entry to the gurdwara at Jaiton. I will send on copies in English and vernacular as soon as they are ready.

Yours sincerely,

To,

The Hon.Mr.J.Crerar C.S.I.,C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department, Delhi.

-(S.A.Shah)-

Extract ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ from a demi-official letter, dated 26th February 1924, from the ~~Deputy~~ Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division.

X X X X X

6. It is now beginning to be possible to see what the state of things is in the villages. I am told that the result of the 21st has been to wash out all talk or idea of the Maharaja of Nabha and to focus the whole agitation on the question of Akhand Path. Apparently the ordinary man believes that Akhand Path was stopped and is deeply sympathetic. He has not heard of course that the Jatha could have entered Gangsar Gurdwara if they had been willing to do so in the prescribed way. Though I doubt whether we shall ever be able to get our side of the question before the country side, it is absolutely essential that if any Government communique is going to be published as to conditions on which access to Gangsar Gurdwara will be given, it should be published at once and broadcasted widely.

X X X X X

&&&&&&&&&&&&&&&&

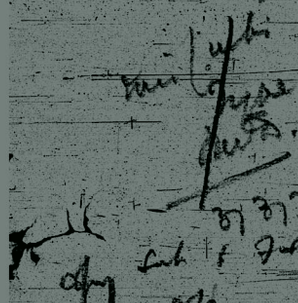
There should be
blanket on file after
Mr. has seen. No
action is necessary.
Copies to F&P D.

J. crowe
2/12

Mr hrr
2/12

Such a copy he sent
for return and we
at once to Pol. Dept.
copy & name.

J. Crowe
3/3



Secret

53 8953

No. 6521. 3/87

Punjab Civil Secretariat,

Lahore, dated 1. 3. 1924.

DEPART
Date 3/3
File No
Serial File
No. 819

My dear Crerar,

In continuation of para.2 of my secret D.O.letter No.8444-F-SB of the 28th of February, I am desired to enclose copies ~~in English~~, Urdu, and Gurmukhi of the proclamation there referred to, for the information of the Govt. of India. This really concerns the Foreign & Political Deptt: rather than the Home Department, so perhaps you will pass this on to Thompson.

Yours sincerely,

H D Craik

To/

The Hon.Mr.J.Crerar C.S.I.,C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Home Department,
Delhi.

-(S.A.Shah)-

اطلاعِ عام

واقعات جیتو کے متعلق دو امور ایسے ہیں جن کے بارے میں لوگوں میں غلط فہمی پائی جاتی ہے :-

(۱) کہا جاتا ہے کہ ستمبر گزشتہ میں جیتو میں اکھنڈ پاٹھ بند کر دیا گیا تھا۔ اور کہ اُس کو دوبارہ شروع کرنا ضروری ہے۔ یہ درست نہیں ہے۔ اکھنڈ پاٹھ کبھی ایک منٹ کے لئے بھی بند نہیں کیا گیا تھا۔

(۲) کہا جاتا ہے کہ سکھوں کو جیتو میں اکھنڈ پاٹھ میں شریک ہونے سے روکا جا رہا ہے۔ یہ بھی صحیح نہیں ہے۔ سکھ اس میں شریک ہو سکتے ہیں۔ بشرطیکہ وہ کسی ایک وقت میں ایک مقررہ تعداد سے زیادہ مندر میں داخل نہ ہوں اور بشرطیکہ وہ وعدہ کریں کہ وہ اکھنڈ پاٹھ کی رسم ادا ہو چکنے کے بعد ریاست سے نکل جائینگے۔ یہ شرائط ضروری ہیں۔ کیونکہ مہاراجہ کے اپنی ریاست کے انتظام سے اپنے آپ کو علیحدہ کر لینے کی کارروائی کے متعلق جو کسی طرح بھی مذہبی معاملہ نہیں ہے۔ ایک باقاعدہ سیاسی مظاہرہ کے ذریعہ جیتو میں شورش برپا کر دی گئی ہے۔

55-1/3

ਨੋਟਿਸ

ਜੈਤੋ ਦੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਦੋ ਰੱਲਾਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਬਤ ਆਮ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੁਲੇਖਾ ਲਗਾ ਹੈ:—

(੧) ਇਹ ਆਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੈਤੋ ਵਿਚ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਸਿੰਬਰ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਬੰਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਏ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਪਾਠ ਦਾ ਮੁੜ ਅਰੰਭ ਕਰਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਕਦੀ ਇਕ ਮਿੰਟ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਬੰਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ॥

(੨) ਇਹ ਆਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੈਤੋ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਠੀਕ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸਿੱਖ ਪਾਠ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੇਕਰ ਇਕ ਮੁਕੱਰਰਾ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਆਦਮੀ ਇਕ ਵੇਲੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਨਜਾਣ ਜੇ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਰੱਲ ਦਾ ਕਰਾਰ ਕਰਣ ਕਿ ਪਾਠ ਦੇ ਭੋਗ ਪੌਣ ਦੇ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਉਹ ਰਿਆਸਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਗੇ। ਇਹ ਸ਼ਰਤਾਂ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹਨ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਜੈਤੋ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਲਾ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਿਆਸਤ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਤੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪਨੂੰ ਅੱਡ ਕਰਣ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਇਕ ਬਾਕੈਦਾ ਪੋਲੀਟੀਕਲ ਨੁਮੈਸ਼ ਕਰਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਮਾਮਲਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਧਾਰਮਕ ਨਹੀਂ॥

ਦਸਤਖ਼ਤ ਮੈਨੇਜਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਰਬਾਰ

56

NOTICE.

In connection with events at Jaito there are two matters on which there are misapprehensions among the public.

(1) It is said that the Akhand Path was stopped at Jaito in September last and that it is necessary to reopen it. This is not true. The Akhand Path was never stopped for a minute.

(2) It is said that Sikhs are being prevented from attending Akhand Path at Jaito. This also is not true. Sikhs can attend if not more than a fixed number enter the shrine at any one time and if they promise to leave the State when the ceremony is over. These conditions are necessary as the trouble at Jaito has been caused by an organized political demonstration regarding the action of the Maharaja in separating himself from the administration of his State, which is in no way a religious matter.

REPORT

57

Under orders of the local Govt. I have held an enquiry into the unfortunate incidents that took place on the 21st of February 1924 at Jaitu, in the Nabha State, in connection with the arrival of the Shahidi Jatha of 500 men with the announced object of resuming the alleged interrupted Akhand Path in Gurudwara Gangsar. I have examined so many as 56 witnesses including the Administrator of the Nabha State, Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston, the President and two members of the Faridkote Council of Regency, Military Officers in charge of the operations that day, Lt. Col. J. C. Coldstream, D.C. Freozepore, Lt. Col. E. G. Gregson, Supdt. of Police Ferozepore, several Raisis and villages of the Nabha State and some Akali members of the Shahidi Katha. Before going into the evidence given by the witnesses it may be explained here that a batch of about 25 Akalis is being daily arrested by the Nabha State authorities at Jaitu on their way to the Gurudwara to resume the Akhand Path. They are usually non-violent in their character, but the declared object of the Shahidi Jatha as its name implies was a different one. It was to enter the Gurudwara and to resume the Akhand Path at all costs and not to sheepishly surrender themselves like other Akalis to usual arrests only on their way to the Gurudwara, and even if they are once turned out they would again and again come and in the attempt they would even go to the extent of loosing their lives. So the object of the jatha was unusually strong and a different one. At least it is obvious enough that a marked distinction did really exist.

From the evidence on record it seems that the announcement of the formation of such a jatha was indeed a great news for the Akali public and for the Nabha people. It was an opportunity for the daring ones to come to the forefront, get themselves enlisted in the

ranks of the jatha and to do something practically. It was also a welcome news for the Extremist Section of the Congress as is shown by the presence of Prof. Gidwani and Dr. Kitchlew with the jatha. So the arrival of such a jatha naturally attracted large crowds at every halting place all along their way to Jaitu- Some of them brought sweets and refreshments for them others came as mere spectators, paid their durshan to the Jatha and went away but many more accompanied them, encouraged them and openly declared their intention of using force against those who happen to intercept the onward march of the Shahidi Jatha. A member of the Shahidi Jatha, Jagat Singh, relates the incidents of an offer of a subsidy of 500 men to the jatha. There is evidence to show that at Hari ke Patan the Droli Jatha visited the Shahidi Jatha but they were told to go away and replied that they would go away then but would join the Shahidi Jatha either at Lande or Bargari. It appears that at Lande a large number of the Droli Jatha arrived including many who had visited Hari ke Patan. In a Dewan held there in the evening a member of the Droli Jatha is said to have addressed the Shahidi Jatha saying that he had brought 500 men for their safety but the Shahidi Jatha must arrange for their food in their Langar which was separate from that which was provided for the ordinary people coming to see the Jatha and which had uptil then been exclusively used by the members of the Shahidi Jatha. Accordingly the Shahidi Jatha fed them in their Langar. Further there is also evidence that in their way from Bargari to Jaitu the Chief Jathadar halted the Jatha and addressed the Droli Jatha that the time for their work had come. There is evidence to show that the Shahidi Jatha instead of proceeding to Samalsar according to their published programme went to Lande village in the Moga Tehsil to which the principle members of the Droli Jatha belong - apparently with

the object of obtaining help of all sorts from the members of the Droli Jatha. Lt. Col. Coldstream, D.C. Ferozepore states that he received reports from the Tehsildar of Moga after the jatha had left its last camp in Ferozepore District that the Droli men had left with the Shahid Jatha and some of them were armed with revolvers. Inspite of the statement that they were so mixed up with the crowd that it was hard to distinguish from others there is overwhelming evidence to show that they were really the leaders of the most noisy, yelling and disorderly majority of the mob following the jatha. Ultimately at Bargari in Faridkot territory the last halting place of the Jatha, the number of the mob swelled up between 8 to ten thousand. There is evidence to show that at Bargari a large number of men belonging to the Nabha State waited upon the Shahidi Jatha to reason with them and to dissuade them from coming in such large numbers and in that military formation. L. Izat Rai a member of the Faridkot Council and other witnesses state that the mob after they had left Bargari armed themselves with tambas (kudgels) freshly doped off from the trees.

On the other side the Nabha State Officials were making preparations for the reception of the jatha. Their arrangements as is stated by Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston were all for the convenient handling of these 500 men and their sewadars which were expected to be not more than 200 to 300 by spliting them into small parties by the use of barbed wires and barriers in order to facilitate their arrest. Even inspite of the various reports which, the Administrator received from time to time that a mob of Akalis were flocking round the jatha in large numbers he seems to have never thought that all this mass of uncontrolled individuals would really accompany the Shaidi Jatha. The deportation of the

villagers of Ilaka Nabha as above mentioned requested the Shahidi Jatha to send away these big crowds and especially the irresponsible Drolis whom they feared most and also that they were welcome to enter the Gurudwara in batches of 50 at a time but all this was to no purpose. There is evidence to show that the members of the deputation were not only ridiculed but were treated with considerable rudeness by the mob.

On the morning of the 21st a mob of about ten thousand Akalis ranging on a front of half a mile in length started from Bargari. It may be noted that the mob was met by the State Officials at the canal distributary within the Nabha Territory and a notice was read out to them asking them not to proceed in such large numbers but that they should come according to the proclamation issued that is 50 at a time on the condition that they would leave the Nabha territory after the Akhand Path had been finished. But they refused to listen to them and moved on and on. It may also be pointed here that up to Bargari the Granth Sahib (scriptures) was in front of the procession but from Bargari onwards it was removed to the centre and the band which had accompanied them was dismissed. There is evidence to show that this arrangement was deliberately made to protect a sacrilege in case of conflit and the Droli Jatha took up the position on their flanks. As the Administrator never imagined that he would ever stand in need of using troops in arresting the jatha he had only some villagers Police and some men of the State Infantry with him. With the exception of 20 country Police men who were armed with smooth bored guns all the rest had dangs. It was a little time before the Jatha came in sight that one of the sowars and L. Izat Rai a member of the Faridkot council warned him of the seriousness of the situation. He ordered a platoon

of the State Infantry to go and change their lathis for rifles. Col. Muirhead meanwhile arrived. The clouds of dust and the consequent enormity of the numbers of the mob coming in advance of the jatha thus greatly excited in mood, the disorderly way in which they were advancing and the brandishing of all sorts of weapons which which they were armed made the Administrator change his former arrangements and issue orders to the villagers to withdraw from the scene. Realising the seriousness of the situation Col. Muirhead also called in a Squadron of Skinners Horse and stationed them on the left of the road from Bargari to Jaitu, to command a more central position while the 6 platoons of Gurkhas were called closer in reserve. The Shahidi Jatha was at this time totally screened and hemmed in by this disorderly rabble who seemed to be prepared for an onslaught. The Akali mob was at a distance of about 200 yards from the first barrier when Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston along with some other State Officials advanced to meet them and with outstretched arms shouted at the top of his voice asking them to halt and to disperse and repeatedly warned them of his being obliged to open fire in case they refuse to do so. But they did not listen to him and defied him by making a wild display of their various weapons and told him that they had come there to die so much so that he had to run back to the barriers. The mob followed him recklessly and seems to have absolutely forgotten the sanctity of proposed non-violent object of the Shahidi Jatha. The leading men of the mob were at a distance of 8 to 10 paces from Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston when he issued orders to the Police to fire three rounds controlled fire. Now in order to judge whether this firing was justified or not we must reiterate some of the events already mentioned. The jatha as usual started on the instructions of S. G. P. C. and had sworn to remain non-voilent

under circumstances of gravest provocation. But their amalgamation with voilent jathas that is Droli jatha &c. and huge crowds armed with all sorts of weapons which they could catch hold of was certainly a breech of the precept. The lopping off tambas from trees on the way is a proof of the mob's preparation to use force in case an attempt was made to stop them. Had the jathadar of the Shahidi Jatha tried in earnest to send off the gathering crowd he could do so by vigoniously appealing to the mob and by expounding the sanctity of their mission. The way in which the Shahidi Jatha men encouraged the Droli Jatha men and others to accompany them accepted all offers of sweets from them, had a common langar at Tarantaran and Bargari , did not check them from lopping of kudgels from trees on the way, allowed them to make all sorts of noises round granth sahib and changed their way from Smalsar to Lande is sufficiently incriminating. But on the other hand the repeated requests of the Shahidi Jathadar in asking them to allow his jatha to proceed on unattended to Jaitu and also his statements that they had taken the solemn vow of remaining non-voilent both in words and in action makes me believe that this was merely a subter fuge especially in view of his action I have noted above of calling on the Droli Jatha to do their part when the mob was nearing Jaito. Thus it is obvious that the mob as a matter of fact accompanied the jatha with its connivance if not with expressed consent and so the members of the Shahidi Jatha by their unpardonable conduct put the Nabha authorities in such an awkward position that they could not have saved the situation without firing on the mob. As already shewn they ridiculed and rudely treated the Panchayat and kept on advancing towards Jaitu. They did not care for anything and went on with all their characteristic roudyism. They defied the Administrator and the

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State Officials and even threatened him by closely following him at his heels and waved their weapons in a way which clearly showed their intention of breaking through the barriers and making short work of all that fell in their way. The mob seemed to be determined in the course they had adopted as is shown by their subsequent conduct. They went on even when they were warned that they will be fired upon, The Administrator after doing all that he could really do to peacefully ward off the danger to the Gurudwara village and the villagers of Jaitu became helpless. The situation in which he was thus placed was simply hopeless and the only solution to the impending danger was to disperse them by use of force.

The efforts of the officers of the Ferozepore Distt. at Talwandi Bhai to bring them to reason, of the Faridkot authorities in forbidding their subjects to join them, the waiting of Panchayats upon them, the offer of the authorities that they could come to the Gurudwara in batches of 50 at a time and finally the loud warnings of the Administrator, Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston are all sufficient proofs of the cool headed way in which they were handled. But they seemed to be bent upon what they did and so it was I believe as an absolute necessity that the Administrator opened fire and that none too soon.

Even after this short burst of fire the mob showed no signs of retiring. They swerved on to their right and made a dash towards Tibbe Sahib. The situation being grave and critical once more Mr. J. Wilson-Johnston had to order the State platoon to fire three rounds of controlled fire again which was accordingly done. There is evidence to show that fire arms were also being used by the Akalis side. One Imamuddin a resident of Dubri Khana a village in the Nabha State received a shot under his left thigh one bullet

passed through the turban of Hazura Singh (W. No. 13) another pierced through a door of a cattle shed belonging to a resident of Jaitu and several others ~~xxx xxxx~~ whizzed past by various British Officers,& S. B. S. Indar Singh President of the Faridkot Council &c. The Akali Shahidi witnesses also tell us about the use of a D. B. gun by one Jagat Singh of the Droli Jatha. Immamudding, Hazura Singh, S.B.S. Inder Singh &c. the witnesses above referred to were behind the firing party so it is highly improbable for the~~ir~~ shots to have come from any other side than the Akalis.

There is no denying the fact that the jatha was accompanied by a large mob under the leadership of Droli Jatha whose ring leaders were Sucha Singh and Dulla Singh badmashes. But the evidence given before me that the number of guns with the Akalis ranged from 5 to 10 or 12 does not seem to be convincing. For the purpose of this enquiry however I think it is not necessary for me to determine the exact number of the guns the Akalis possessed ~~are~~ or used, all that I have got to determine is whether they did use any fire arms. After giving a thoughtful consideration to this I am of opinion that they had a few guns and they used them alright at the time.

As to the question who began the firing I consider that whichever party began the firing does not matter much as there is overwhelming evidence to show that the mob was prepared to achieve its end by all possible means and were so constituted that a prudent man under the circumstances had no option but to open fire to repel their menacing advancing in military formation. Now when the Akali mob became absolutely voilent as is shown by their conduct in openly exchanging shots with State Forces the authorities were free to deal with them in a way that most befitted their conduct. Had they dispersed and resorted

to their usual peaceful way, the authorities who as has been shown above, were illprepared for an onslaught would have certainly stopped firing. But the unfortunate mob made a battle of the whole show they shouted on to their right in full force in order to capture the Gurudwara Tibbe Sahib by a general assault. The Administrator once more observing the frantic rush of the mob to the left ordered another three rounds of controlled fire. In the meantime Major Bellkingsley finding that amass of Akalis was trying to reach Tibbe Sahib from the side where he had taken up his position with a platoon of 1st 4th Gurkhas fired upon them. He states that his men were also exposed to a great danger and some of the bullets from the Akali side actually fell at a distance of a few paces from him. After this the mob faltered for a few moments but when they had once gone out of control there was no receding back. They swept on furiously under the leadership of Sucha Singh mounted on a white pony with a drawn sword in his hand and issuing orders in English. This was the most desperate charge which they made, But major Lorrimer and his ten dismounted sowars completely dispersed them after two short burst of fire. The Akalis broke up finally and had to be pursued for a distance by Col. Muirhead to stop their rejoing the party that had reached the Tibbe Sahib. No violence was used in their final dispersal by the sowars and it was simply done to stimulate the flying Akalis into further efforts to vanish.

The suggestion that it would have been much better had the authorityes used some other force - say the use of lathis instead of firing is suggesting something, which in my opinion could not meet the exegencies of time. The mob was as has been shown already armed with all sorts of weapons including fire arms.

How was it possible tostop them by the use of a corresponding and ~~other~~ rather unsuitable use of a force ~~xxxxx~~ like that of the la this. It would have been still worse and still more impossible to disperse them in this way.

From the evidence before me I gather that 14 Akalis were found shot dead and 34 wounded on the evening of the 21st out of whom five died ~~next~~ day. The total number of casualties thus coming up 19 dead and 29 wounded in all, 3 wounded were brought in from Ferozepore by Police on the 3rd day. Keeping in view the comparatively small number of casualties out of such a huge crowd leads me to believe that the force used was minimum and the firing was considerate. MY this view is strengthened by the fact that the party in charge of the Granth Sahib was deliberately left to proceed unharmed to the Tibbe Sahib. Had the State Forces directed their guns to the palinquin containing Granth Sahib I think it highly improbable that it could have reached the Tibbe Sahib unmolested. This undoubtedly shows that the State Officials had no intention to fire upon Shahidi Jatha if they did not ~~resort~~ resort to any violence. The Shahidi Jatha lost a few of its members only on account of its being thoroughly hemmed in and screened by the stampering mob who were trying to capture the Gurdwara by a general assault.

The ~~xxxxxxx~~ evidence of all the witness from the Administrator downwards including the Akali jatha men and the medical attendants on both sides shows that after the firing had ceased all the wounded were properly attended upon by the doctors and they were all conveyed to the camp after first aid had been rendered to them. The statement of Sub Asstt Surgeon Kehar Singh who had accompanied the jatha throws sufficient light upon the good treatment the wounded men were meted out by the

authorities. He also tells ~~me~~ us that he was provided with all the necessary dressing materials by the State authorities and that he was in no way deterred from rendering medical aid to his men nor he or any of their medical staff was beaten or illtreated.

The authorites then arrested the Shahidi Jatha on the skirts of the mound on which the Tibbe Sahib stands but they did not touch those who were in immediate charge of the palanquin of the sowari Sahib and requested the party to convey the Granth Sahib either to the village Dharamsala or to the Gurudwara to save it, from the disgrace of its being placed on unclean ground. The party refused all terms but they voluntarily withdrew at about 10 p.m. when some of the selected Sikhs of the State took the Granth Sahib to the village Dharamsala with due respect and ceremony

To sum up -

it is abundently clear that the mob and the Shahidi Jatha defied all efforts on the part of the people and authorities of the Nabha State to reason with them and chose an unreasonable course. That the mob was in an excited mood and armed with all sorts of weapons including fire arms and prepared to see through the game. They all knew what the game was and even went to the extent of insulting and assaulting the Administrator and after brandishing the weapons they actually used the fire arms. It was but naturaly and the only course left to the Administrator was to order firing which was done not too soon.

The small number of the casualties in such a big mob shews that the firing was controlled and did not exceed the exegencies of the moment. The wounded were attended to at once. And that for the complicity of the Droli Jatha the unfortunate could not have but happened.

Dated, 6/3/1924

Balwant Sing Nabha
Bar-at-Law
M.I.C. PCS.

Confidential.

613

Poll 5

859.

D.O.No. 679

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

Lahore, dated 4th March, 1924.

My dear Crerar,

With reference to your telegram No.D-727-Poll., forwarding Wilson-Johnston's complaint that he received no intimation of the actual departure of the second "jatha" from Amritsar till March the 2nd, I am desired to say that the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar was instructed ten days ago to send copies of all his reports direct to Wilson-Johnston. He informed me yesterday on the telephone that he did so send copies of all his reports since February the 21st, and I can only surmise that the delay has taken place in the post. I have again impressed upon the Deputy Commissioner the necessity of promptly reporting anything of importance to Wilson-Johnston by telegram, if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

H D Craik

To

The Hon.Mr.J.Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Govt: of India,
Home Department, Delhi.

69

7 A.P. Dept Manual

2nd.

[illegible]

5/3

Rcvd 3.MAR 1924
File No.
Serial No.
Diary No. 177-P(c)

Seen thanks.

[illegible]

7.3.24

P/7/3

Home Deptt. (As by name)

No. no. D (77-P(c) dt. 7/3/24

D. No. 186-P(c)

700

One copy of Magistrates Report on the Jaito affair is sent for the use of the Home Dept.

L. Dobbie
7.3.24

Hon'ble Mr Crerar.

U.O. no. D 186-P(c) dt. 7/3/24

For information. F. & P. Dept.
will kindly submit to H.E.
I understand the publication
of the report is under
consideration.
J. Crerar
8/3

~~Hon.~~
I think that this should be published now
8/3
Pol Secy to arrange for the
J. Crerar
8/3

How do these dates
compare with the
programme we received
in the letter
of this?

J. Crewe
5/3

Pol. Sec[y]

Noted. The movements of the Latvia
conform to the programme.

Sec. D.
5/3/24

J. Crewe
8/3

E.B.

72

Delhi,
The 11th March 1924.

Dear Sir Malcolm Hailey,

We have been informed that a second Akali Jatha of 500 started from Amritsar for the Gangsar Gurdwara at Jaitho, and that it is due to arrive there on the 14th instant. In view of the deplorable occurrences which took place at Jaitho on the 21st February last, we desire to be present at the Gurdwara at Jaitho at the time the Jatha arrives there. We shall feel obliged if you will inform the Administrator at Nabha or any other person who may be in charge of the place, of our intention to do so, so that no objection may be raised by him to our proceeding to Jaitho and staying there until the Jatha reaches there, and for such time thereafter as we may consider to be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Madan Mohan Malaviya,
Devaki Prasad Sinha,

Members of the Legislative Assembly.

To :-

The Hon'ble Sir Malcolm Hailey,
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

D.No. 947-Poll.

The position is, I understand, familiar to H.M. Two telegrams have been received from the Administrator (the yellow slip below) and a draft reply to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others has been prepared by Mr. Thompson. If approved it will be faired in this Department and copies put up for Hon'ble Member's signature. It will probably be necessary for these gentlemen to leave Delhi to-night and the Foreign & Political are anxious to be able to telegraph as soon as possible to the Administrator when they expect to arrive at Nabha.

Sd. C.W.Gwynne, 12-3-24.

Sd. W.M.H(ailey), 12-3-24.

F. & P. Dept. (Major Ogilvie).

74 74

Delhi the 12th March

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of yesterday I write to let you know that there will be no objection to your going to Jaito, and staying there until the Jatha arrives and for such period afterwards as the Administrator may determine. It is not unlikely that if there is not trouble on the 14th, he will ask you to leave on the morning of the next day.

You will no doubt understand that the position at Jaito is not quite the same as it would be in British India. Like everyone else who is there, you will be subject to any orders that may be issued by the Administrator during your stay in Nabha territory, and should there be any risk of violence being used by the Akalis, it will not be possible to permit you to occupy a position where you might be exposed to danger and might hamper the authorities in any way.

The Administrator desires me to let you know that it will not be possible for him to provide accomodation for you. You will no doubt be prepared to make your own arrangements.

I shall be obliged if you will let me know when you expect to arrive at Jaito, so that I may telegraph to the Administrator.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- W.M.Hailey.

To.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, M.L.A.
Mr Devaki Prasad Sinha, M.L.A.
Sardar Kartar Singh, M.L.S.,
Sardar Gulab Singh, M.L.S.

D.O.No. S/323

Government of India

HOME DEPARTMENT

(Political)

Delhi, the 12th March 1924.

Dear Sirs,

In continuation of Sir Malcolm Hailey's letter of this morning, I write to let you know that the Administrator has wired to say that he has been able to arrange accommodation for you. Kindly let me know with the least possible delay when you propose to arrive at ~~Patna~~ Jaito in order that the Administrator may be informed.

Yours sincerely,

J. Crerar

To

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, M.L.A.
Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha, M.L.A.

Sardar Kartar Singh, M.L.A.
Sardar Gulab Singh, M.L.A.

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Political Department

Delhi, 12th March 19 24

My dear Wilson-Johnston,

Please refer to your D.O.letter No.Camp-40 dated the 7th of March. Durga Prashad came to Delhi and on the 10th of March a discussion took place with him and with the Solicitor to the Government of India regarding the evidence against Kitchlew, Gidwani and other persons implicated in the disturbances on the 21st of February at Jaito.

(1) Kitchlew The evidence against him was discussed and every aspect of the case was examined. The conclusion that was arrived at was that no sufficient evidence exists for prosecuting him under Section 148 Indian Penal Code or any other similar section. The only feasible action to be taken against him would be for the Administrator to serve a notice on him under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code forbidding

him to return to Nabha.

(2) Gidwani No action is necessary. He is at present serving his suspended sentence of 2½ years in Nabha jail and he may be left where he is for the present.

(3) Shahidi Jatha It was decided that the members of the Jatha should be left at Bawal for the present. The question of the disposal of the rank and file and of the prosecution of the ring-leaders need not be considered until after the 14th of March. When the second Jatha is disposed of the Government of India will be in a better position than they are at present to decide what should be done with the members of the first Jatha.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. G. D. Ogilvie,
Depy. Secretary

To

J. Wilson-Johnston, Esq., C.B.E.,
Administrator, Nabha State.

Copy to :

The Home Department.

Dear Sir Malcolm Hailey

I should like to accompany the party of members who go to Jaito. I dare say you will agree with me in thinking that members of the Council of State have the right of getting the same concession as the members of the Assembly.

Yours sincerely
S. Vedamurti
Council of State

12th March 24

To the Hon. S Secretary
of State

Dear Sir Tancredi,

I am directed
by the Secretary of State
to acknowledge your
letter of the 12th, and
the G.O.C.
have no
objection to your coming
to Paris
but would let
me know when you propose
to arrive there so that
the arrangements can
be performed.

80

D.O.No.D/325

Government of India

HOME DEPARTMENT

(Political)

Delhi, the 13th March 1924.

Dear Mr. Vedamurti,

Sir Malcolm Hailey desires me to say in reply to your letter of the 12th, that the Government of India have no objection to your going to Jaito and staying there until the Jatha arrives and for such period afterwards as the Administrator may determine. Kindly let me know when you propose to arrive there, so that the Administrator can be informed.

Yours sincerely,

To

The Hon'ble Mr. S. Vedamurti, M.C.S.

Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press—17-2-1923—2,000.

91

CONFIDENTIAL.

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No. 8444-F-**S. B.**

Dated Lahore, the 5th March, 1924.

My dear Crerar

I am desired to forward for your information a copy of a report dated the 29th February, 1924, which only reached me on the 3rd instant, by an officer of the Punjab C.I.D. regarding the despatch of the second "Shahidi Jatha" from Amritsar.

Yours sincerely,

H. S. Craik

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
DELHI.

(M.H).

Copy of a report by an officer of the Punjab C.I.D. dated the 29th February, 1924, regarding the Akali demonstration in Amritsar on the 28th February, 1924.

There was a much larger audience in the Akal Takht Diwan held yesterday in connection with the despatch of the second Shahidi Jatha to Jaiton. There was a bigger crowd of sympathisers and spectators who filled the balconies and roofs of the Bungas and house adjoining Golden Temple and who lined the Jatha's route. A number of Akali speakers, including Nirmal Singh, B.A., of Sialkot (acquitted the other day only) delivered extremely exciting speeches, and a large amount of money was also donated.

2. Owing to Mahatma Gandhi's message, advising the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee not to send any more Shahidi Jathas to Jaiton in a hurry , no Congress or even Khilafat leaders were noticed taking part this time. The local Congress leaders expected that Akalis will not ignore Gandhi's advice and were consequently much disappointed to find the Jatha going. It is believed that Congressmen, who are already getting suspicious and jealous of Akalis, will probably fall off openly from Akalis. But for immediate purposes Gandhi's message brought about no change in the attitude of the general public and the Shahidi Jatha received a tremendous and decidedly greater ovation this time.

3. The organisers laid greater stress on the so-called 'non-violence' to be observed by the Jatha. They also positively asked the spectators not to go with the Jatha beyond their villages and in no case beyond Bhai-ka-Bengia - the last halting place of the Jatha before it enters Nabha territory. At that point the Jatha commanders will try to convince that their men are not possessing any arms.

4. The Jatha men were generally speaking able-bodied men. They seemed full of enthusiasm and looked quite cheerful. Again they had majority of ex-soldiers amongst them this time. There were about a dozen of Nirmalas and Namdharis in the Jatha. It is reported that they were only Akalis in disguise in order

to give the Jatha a more representative character. A few women were also seen marching in the Jatha and were said to be going with Jatha. I am told that there were several Khalsa College students in the Jatha. They have again taken Granth Sahib with them. They are not taking much of the rations and stores with them and will depend on the hospitality of others at their halting places, this they are doing to avoid their stores falling in the hands of the Jaiton authorities.

Some press reporters, photographers, and a well organised ambulance party include the Jatha followers. Mr S. Zimand, the American Press representative, who meddled at Jaiton last time, was seen watching the Jatha's departure yesterday.

Teja Singh of Gurdaspur and Indar Singh of Sialkot districts were amongst the Jatha commanders. Definite information in this respect will be submitted later on.

5. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee tried their best and used their usual tactics to get men for the Shahidi Jatha and encouraged all sort of stories about the "Jaiton attrocities" and the appearance of Guru Gobind Singh in order to rouse the Sikh masses.

The way in which the Akalis have responded to join the Shahidi Jatha and the eagerness with which they insisted to be given an earlier opportunity of proceeding to Jaiton shows that the actual firing at Jaiton on 21st February 1924 has not changed their minds and instead of cooling down their enthusiasm has stirred them to come forward in larger numbers. It is feared that the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee will in any case succeed in getting sufficient men for two three more Shahidi Jathas even if the firing is repeated. The outgoing Jatha was, however, hoping that they will not be fired upon.

6. There were yesterday persons, Sikhs and others, who pitied the poor dupes and cursed the willy Akali leaders for misleading the ignorant Sikh rustics and sending them to face death in the name of religion. But the general belief, that the Jatha men were marching in the 'jaws of death', evocked much sympathy for them, and the crowds of weeping women added much to make the show a pathetic one.

The sentimental interest and sympathy, which such demonstrations usually create under the circumstances are seldom far going and never lasting, but they will not be vanished by the 14th of March 1924, when the Jatha is to be dealt with at Jaiton. It is feared therefore that the firin if repeated again this time will create much more indignatio against the Government and sympathy for Akalis.

Even well meaning persons, including a few tried loyalists, who used to say till recently that the Government were not sufficiently strong in chastising the insolent Akalis were heard remarking yesterday, after witnessing the Jatha's departure, that the Government shall have to give in as far as the Akhand Path affair is concerned. They were heard saying that proverbial Sikh fanaticism was extremely roused and that further repression will add fuel to the fire. General impression yesterday was that it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to stop such fanatics full of blind faith, from obeying the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee's orders as long as Akali leaders can find some convenient excuse to say that the religion was in danger.

Stories of the appearance at Jaiton of Guru Gobind Singh, which are so cleverly concocted and circulated by Akali agents, have caused much mischief.

Enlistment for more Shahidi Jathas is proceeding.

I submit for consider-
-ation a draft reply
which has been drawn
up in consultation
with F. & P. Dept (to whom
copies of the S. of S.'s telegram
& the reply as issued will be sent).

J. Crerar
6/3/24

Hm. WW 6/3
PSV.

Hd. approves
Eden
7/3

This was seen at
conf. J. Crerar
7/3

11 am
6/3

L. S.V.O. 1/6
7. 3. 24

Sent P.V.O. 7/3/24
7.30 pm

Copy of a demi-offical letter from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, to the Political Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department. Delhi, No. 8444-F.B. dated the 12th March 1924.

I am desired to forward for the information of the Government of India an extract from a letter, dated the 9th March, 1924, received from the Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepore, regarding the progress of the second Shahidi Jatha, which is on its way to Jaiton.

Extract from a letter, dated the 9th March, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab.

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x x x x x x x x

The Jatha reached Moga yesterday. I did not see it arrive, as I had to go in to Ferozepore for an important District Board meeting and was not back till the evening, but I attach a statement kindly furnished to me by Mr. McKee of the Americam Mission School, who watched the arrival from his compound wall, which is on the road along which the Jatha passed, and saw it at close quarters. Mr. McKee's colleague- Mr. Carter told me that he was struck by the number of men in the Jatha, who appeared to be of the School Master or graduate type. There was a large crowd watching the arrival but it was quite orderly and no insults were offered to the missionaries. Captain Cummins of Hodson's Horse and Mr. Herdon witnessed the passage of the Jatha by the Rest House. The Jatha was held up at the level crossing for the passage of a tra and at once sat down. The two officers informed me that

that as soon as it sat down, the Jathedars began to distribute literature to the spectators and to read out the contents of the leaflets. Men were ready to give water to the Jatha and to dust their faces and clothes. When the train had passed, the Jatha was set in motion again by means of bugle calls, and what struck these officers most was the evidence of organisation of no mean order, which this halt afforded. The town of Moga was crowded, but the figure of 20,000 persons given in my telegram of last night errs perhaps on the side of excess.

Wilson-Johnston came over from Nabha on Friday afternoon and said that he would be very glad, if I could collect some of the leading men here this morning to meet this. This I did. He explained to them what the situation of Jaiton amounted to and asked them to interview the Jathedars and endeavour to induce them to accept the terms, which he had offered, and also to give a promise that if spectators insisted on crossing the border, the Jatha would sit down and not move on until the spectators removed themselves. The result of the interview with the Jathedars was reported to me this afternoon. Though not satisfactory, it does not, I think, quite shut the door on the possibility of a settlement though I would not count on such. The reply was in effect that they could not bind themselves by any hard and fast conditions, nor would they promise that the Jatha would sit down if the spectators insisted on accompanying them, but their wish was that the Jatha should enter Nabha territory unaccompanied, but that as a Sangat (congregation) was entitled to attend an Akhand Path, they could not bind themselves to prohibit people from following them in order to satisfy themselves that the Akhand Path was really being performed.

Wilson-Johnston had gone before the men returned, so I am communicating the above to him.

As regards

As regards spectators, the situation appears to
the people of one village accompany the Jatha i
passage through that village territory, but I am
prepared to say that there are not some persons
go along with it, though these are few in number.

Wilson-Johnston was very strong on the point
that we should accompany and not precede the Jatha
and I agree with him, for I do not see that we do
any good by walking ahead of it, and from all repor
the impression made on the country-side is not havi
the effect, which, I presume, was intended.

x x x x x x x

Statement of Rev. Mckee about the Jatha.

Yesterday about 3 o'clock I was told that the Jatha was approaching on the road which goes from Zira to Moga. When I reached this road near the bounds of the Mission School, I found that a small part of the advance party of the Jatha had already passed. A number of black and yellow flags were in the front and also a brass band. The Jatha marched about six abreast in time to the music. They were also chanting while marching. In the middle of the procession was a palanquin said to contain their religious book. This was borne on bamboo poles by a good number of Sikhs. Both in front and behind this palanquin Sikhs marched carrying swords and sticks. At the rear of the procession was a small red cross band. I was impressed by a number of things about the Jatha, First of all a very large proportion of them seemed to be middle aged and old men. To me most of these looked as if they were farmers or field labourers. There were also some, who appeared to be men from the City, probably students or graduates. These were decidedly in a minority. I was also impressed with the orderliness of the whole procession and with the earnest spirit. I heard no insults or remarks to which any one could make objections. I also sae no distribution of leaflets or heard no speeches made by any member of the Jatha. The men seemd to me to be rather tired from their long march and were decidely travel-stained. I also saw no woman marching with the Jatha.

Quite a large number of people walked along the side of the Jatha and some followed after them. There were also a great many people who had been watching the procession along the Zira Road, who cut across the fields evidently to catch another sight of them on the main road going to the station. The crowd of spectators melted away very rapidly and there was no disturbance near where I was standing.

File No. 628(3)-P
D. No. 206-P(C)

Two copies forwarded to the Hon'ble Mr. J. P. Thompson, C.S.I., I.C.S., Secretary to the Government of India, Political Deptt., Delhi for information, with a copy of translation of the poster referred to in the letter.

Administrator, Nabha State.

:AHK:

D.C. No. Camp/54

Office of the Administrator,
Nabha State,
CAMP JAITU,
Dated, March 11, 1924.

My dear Minchin,

In continuation of my letter of yesterday with reference to Bhai Lab Singh and his attempt to reason with the second Shahidi Jatha, I have now heard that the Bhai Was allowed to address the Jatha, but as soon as he attempted to speak about the events of the 21st February, he was ordered to hold his tongue since the Parbandhak Committee had given orders that no mention of Jaitu was to be made in the Dewan.

Of the notables whom I addressed at Moga on Sunday, some 13 did eventually go and see the Jatha. They tried to reason with them, but they received the reply that the Akalis were not prepared to agree to any terms regarding the performing of what they considered a religious ceremony. They would give no assurance that if accompanied by a mob that they would sit down and wait until the mob had dispersed, since, they said, that the members of the sangat had a right to attend the Akhand Path and "that these people in particular would wish to assure themselves that it was being done properly". I think this makes it clear that it is far from certain that the second Jatha will be unaccompanied.

Gregson tells me that he met Herdon yesterday and that Herdon told him that while he with his armed men and the cavalry was escorting

the Jatha from Moga to Singhwala, members of the Jatha addressed his men and called upon them to use their guns upon their British Officers. I have asked for a written report on this subject and hope to obtain it very shortly.

A very large number of most seditious posters, some of them illustrated with pictures of the Viceroy, yourself, myself, soldiers using machine guns, children being shot &c. &c., have been distributed. The letter press is obviously written with the intention of rousing the feeling of the populace. These are being distributed by the Jatha as it proceeds.

In view of all these facts, I am of opinion, that there is still a possibility that this Jatha may act in a similar way to the first. I am sending to Thompson a translation of one of the posters which was removed from Moga and Singhwala Bazars the other day. Coldstream has sent copies of it to the Punjab Government, and you might be able to get a copy from them. I have only got the one.

This production was printed at the Onkar Press, Amritsar and issued by the General Secr'y of the Shromani Akali Dal.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- J. Wilson-Johnston

Lt. Col. A. B. Minchin, C.I.E.,
A. G. G. Punjab States,
Lahore.

It has been reported that Bhai Labh Singh, Granthi, Amritsar, spoke in the Diwan of the evening of the 9th of March. He began by reviewing scenes in the Sikh History and he went on to exhort them to take Amrit. He then continued by saying that on the 19th of February he proceeded to Jaito, when he was interrupted by those in charge of the Diwan who said that orders from the Parbandhak Committee were that no reference to Jaito was to be made in the Diwan. The following persons were elected by the meeting summoned by the Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepore, to explain the terms of the notice and to offer any explanation that might be required of them from members of the Shahidi Jatha encamped at Moga.

1. Rai Bahadur Mathra Das.
2. Khan Sahib Gul Mohammad Khan.
3. Lal Daulat Ram Sud of Moga.
4. Lala Radha Ram of Moga.
5. Bhai Uttar Singh.
6. Sardar Sarmukh Singh.
7. Sheikh Abdul Rahim.
8. Sardar Madho Singh, Honorary Magistrate.
9. Bhai Gajinder Singh, Sub Registrar.
10. Bhai Rajinder Singh.
11. Bhai Waryam Singh,
12. Sunder Singh Sufedposh. and
13. Sardar Jhanda Singh.

The Jatha are said to have replied that they were not prepared to enter into any terms regarding the performance of what they considered a religious ceremony. There was no further discussion on the matter.

Jaito.

10/3.

94

I think D.I.B had already informed him of the gist of this. Copies returned. This need be placed on the file re communication to Pope at Eucharistic Congress of Hm's statement in the Assembly.

J. Craven
18/5/24

Mr Mr 13/3
PCV

H. D. I.D. No 9469. Role
cf. 15.3.24

Yes he knows
Mr Craven
Undersecretary
15/3

P. S. O. 204
14. 3. 24

To be returned
J. Craven
17/3
Sir H Winderman

Seen & returned
Oct 24/3

15/3

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Secret

969

No. 7641-P

Punjab Civil Secretariat,
Lahore, dated 13. 3. 1924.

My dear Crerar,

I am desired to report the facts mentioned below for the information of the Government of India:--

2. A few days ago, Sirdar Sahib Sobha Singh, an Hony. Magistrate and contractor of Delhi, who is, I understand, well-known to the Hon'ble Home Member, came to see me with a letter of introduction from Kaye. He told me that he had been asked by the wife of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh to see the latter, who was very anxious to come to some sort of arrangement with Government. Sobha Singh is a cousin of Mehtab Singh.

3. As S. Sobha Singh appeared to be a thoroughly loyal and well-disposed person he was allowed to have an interview with S.B. Mehtab Singh (who together with the other Akali leaders is now confined in the Fort at Lahore and being tried there). After the interview he saw me and told me that he had seen both Mehtab Singh and certain other of the accused persons. They had stated that the main points on which they desired to approach Government and their attitude on them were as follows:--

(a) The Nabha question.

As regards this, their only demand is that a Council of Regency, all of whom should be Sikhs, should be appointed as soon as possible.

(b) The Gurdwaras Bill.

This might be either an amendment of the present bill or a new bill. They state they are ready to put forward either.

(c) The "kirpan" question.

Their attitude as regards this is that if Govt accept the resolution passed by the Punjab Legislative Council the other day to the effect that all restrictions under the

Arms Act on the possession of swords should be removed, this will be a final solution of the "kirpan" question.

4. The above were the main points. There were also two subsidiary matters which were mentioned, namely :-

(i) The grievances of demobilized Sikh soldiers should be considered by the Indian Soldiers Board. The main grievance is that the Sikh soldiers have not got their fair share of grants of land.

(ii) The representation of Sikhs in the Punjab Legislative Council should be increased.

5. Sobha Singh's information was to the effect that the leaders and especially Mehtab Singh were in a penitent and reasonable mood. He was, therefore, allowed by this Government to have another interview with them, at which he was authorized to say that he was in touch with Government and that an indispensable preliminary, before Government could consider any representation made to it, was that the following two conditions should be given effect to:--

(a) The despatch of all further "jathas" either to Jaiton, Bhai Pheru or elsewhere must be stopped.

(b) The number of Akalis now at Amritsar must be reduced to a figure sufficient for the reasonable needs of the Golden Temple, say, about 250 to 200 at the outside.

6. This second interview between Sobha Singh and the leaders in the Fort took place on the afternoon of the 10th instant, and the same evening S.Sobha Singh told me that though Mehtab Singh himself was in a more or less reasonable frame of mind the other accused would not accept either of the conditions. Their ideas as to the preliminaries of any discussion, which Sobha Singh reduced to writing, are as follows:--

"If it be desired to produce a calm atmosphere in order to facilitate discussion with a view to a settlement, then both Govt. and the Sikhs should take action. The cessation of activity by the Sikhs only would give rise to serious misunderstanding, from which the reform movement may

may suffer. If Government is prepared to restore the status quo before 13th October last and also to remove all restrictions on the pilgrimage to and worship in the Gangasar gurdwara at Jaiton, the "jathas" will be stopped from going to Jaiton and Bhai Pheru. In that case no more Akalis than are necessary for the service of the gurdwaras will be collected at any gurdwara."

7. These conditions cannot, of course, be accepted, and this Government is, therefore, moving no further in the matter.

8. S. Sobha Singh has returned ~~today~~ to Delhi

Yours sincerely,

J. D. Crerar

To,

The Hon. Mr.J. Crerar C.S.I.,C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
Delhi.

-(S.A.Shah)-

Gur
Ek Unkar Sat/Parshad.

THE TYRANNY HAS REACHED TO THE EXTREMES. THE ENGLISH CIVILIZATION HAS GONE TO BANKRUPTCY

Sensational incidents of general slaughter at Jaito.

BOXES OF DEAD AND WOUNDED WERE SENT TO SOME UNKNOWN PLACE.

An appeal to the civilized world.

Manifesto No.482.

The Jaito bloodshed has created panic throughout the country. Stories are prevalent of this tyranny at all places. When they heard the account of the firing with guns and machine guns on the non-violent Akalis by the cruel officers of the Nabha State, they got estounded and spoke out unhesitatingly that such a cruelty was never heard of or seen before.

Ye the creation of the Almighty, you are still ignorent of the machinations of these wild beasts. When these human beings in the guise of devils arranged to suck the blood of Akalis, they had arranged at the same time that whatever may happen, the clue of their wild and inhuman actions must not be found out. So Johnston and Ogilivie Bahadur, who went to see the occurrences with the intention of screening this bloodshed, arrested Doctor Kitchlew and Professor Gidwani together with his companions. The matter did not end here; several of the spectators were also shot. But it is a proverb that cruelty cannot be concealed and the innocent blood cannot remain undetected.

Oh Patriots!! Listen and listen with strong mind and listen to the atrocities of these wild creatures of ~~the~~ civilized Government, who reiterates Civilization and Civilization. Leave this matter wherefrom the Lewis Gun were fired and where the Machine Guns opened fire from to send the ~~blazing~~ bullets through the hearts of the Akalis. It was a general slaughter, which was done in broad day-light indiscriminately. The stomach of these ~~beasts~~ were filled up with blood. We give subsequent

occurrences which are unrebuttable and which we received from different sources and out of them quote a statement of an officer, who saw the whole affair of general slaughter with his own eyes from beginning to the end.

You might have heard the lamentations of thousands in the garden of life, Hold, your hearts now that the agrieved persons cry.

A QUOTATION FROM THE STATEMENT

Now I am again reverting to Tibbi Saheb and I find that there is none to be seen except the blood of the Shahidis. In the fields, where the non-violent Akalis had faced the battle, now are heard low voices some of which are lamentations. Who are they that are taking them away? They are sweepers of Jaito, Karwali and Chamba. They are collecting the bodies of dead and wounded in Thana and in the Military Camp near the old Kothi. In the meantime the bodies of such Shahidi Akalis, who were killed or wounded and which bodies had already been collected by Akalis in Tibbi, the Nabha Authorities took them in their possession. Now it is about 10 in the night and I intended to leave that place because insolent eyes were tired of these scenes. On reaching the Railway Station I learnt that all the gentry looked depressed. After great persistence a gentleman said that every thingwill come to light on having a look of the open near the go-down. Let my tongue be turned to stone, as it does not cease relating this heart-rending story. On getting nearer I saw that among the wounded some were yelling in agony - including ~~innocent~~ women and children. Later which-ever train stopped there, it was loaded with boxes full of dead and wounded. It is impossible to give the exact number. The gentleman further deposes that at 2 o'clock in the night of the 21st February, as the Bombay Mail stopped at the Station, the sweepers who were tired of working in collecting the dead and wounded for the whole night, refused to work any more, and the gangs of Kot Kapura and Guniana were sent for and put to work. He further deposes that he would prove this word by word in case an impartial enquiry were made.

Oh Lord Reading, who came in India with shouts of Civilization and Justice, see how in your time the so-called civilization is being polluted. You see with your own eyes. Your tyranny has surpassed the bloodshed of O'Dwyer and Dyre. Does civilization allow to open fire on innocent children and women? Does the humanity demand to burn the living wounded instead of rendering them medical aid. The fact is that from the machinary of Goverrment of India, humanity and other virtues have already departed, how, particularly it is the source of all devilish deeds. The saying holds good that on the fall of the British the world would be free from hypocracy. Today we find this proverb literally proved, that Government of India inspite of burning the half dead wounded of Jaito (place of massacre) claims to have given prompt attention to the wounded. It is utterly false. In fact the medical staff with the Jatha and all Sewadars including females were arrested and all the medicines plundered with the intention of depriving the wounded of medical aid and to invite their ~~xxxxx~~ death so that the ambulance party may not be able to guage the exact number of dead and wounded.

Ye Indians! Look howthe non-violent Akalis were put to atrocities in broad day light by the English (Nabha State), Hundreds of mothers lost their innocent sons, but so far those cruels have not been called upon to explain. And why this should have been done, when Government of India themselves were the orignator of all this bloody incidence.

Ye Indians ! would you allow bloodshed of all your innocent beloved sons of Motherland to go in vain? and these cruels to obliterate its memory. Shall Doctor Kitchlew and Gidwani pass their days in Nabha Jail for their life time? Shall the non-violent Akalis going to Jaito to perform Akand Path and proceeding for pilgrimage of Gangsar be fired at similarly? Shall the Jallianwala Bagh Drama be performed every day and these beast will not refrain from such actions. Ye the belowed sons of motherland ! What are you waiting for? Get up and be ready and come forward in the field of action observing the ~~xxx~~ principle of non-violence, so that you may also be able to pa ticipate in

keeping up the glory and pride of your country and nation.

Beloved of the Guru ! Behold how your 500 gallant brothers are advancing cheerfully towards Jaito in spite of the knowledge that their brethren were received with bullets. Why? Merely for the up-keep of their national pride and religious right. Akhand Path be re-opened and the pilgrimage of Gurdwara be opened to all.

Brave Brothers ! You also call Sikh. Recognize your duties and this head which is in your trust, on behalf of the Guru make it over to the Panth and see how success bows before you.

Servant of Panth

General Secretary

Shiromani Akali Dal

Amritsar.

(Printed - Unkar-Press Amritsar.)

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Surely this pamphlet is objectionable & prosecution should be sanctioned.

H.D. Thomson 12/3

Send to SDO.

(Home Dept. (A. Stuart))

M.O. no. D. 206-P(C) dt. 12/3/24

MM 12/3

Sd 12/3

The Poster refers to the Govt of India and seems clearly an offence under s. 124A I.P.C. & should be punishable. The Govt. should be moved for sanction for prosecution and also for taking prompt action under s. 99A Cr. P.C. in this & similar cases.

J. Crerar 12/3.

H.M. 12/3

Draft (d. s.) to
Punjab Govt. which
should be sent by
before issue. T & P Debt

J. Crerar
13/3

a draft do. is submitted for approval. Desp
to go before issue

J. Mac. G.
13/3/24

D.S. 14

C. Bayne
14. 3. 24

Home DEPARTMENT. Confidl File No.

Political BRANCH. Serial No.

Draft Letter / Memorandum / Telegram

Heading: Sedn Cautg Akalis

Case or Diary No. 14/3

Post copy of telegram required —

Date of despatch of above D.O. 24

List of enclosures —

Class for Telegrams ORDINARY. / EXPRESS.

No. S. 337 Dated 18/3/20.

To

H. D. Craik, Esq., C.S.I.,

C.S. to the Govt. of the Punjab.

Confidential.

(Code word for telegrams.)

My dear Craik,

The Government of India have been informed that a large number of seditious posters are being distributed to the Akalis en route to Jaito. A translation of one headed "The tyranny has reached the extreme, the English civilisation has gone to Bankruptcy" has been provided. The poster ~~which~~ is said to have been printed at the Onkar Press and issued by the General Secretary of the Shiromani Akali Dal, ~~was~~ found at Moga and Singhwala Bazaars. It is understood that copies ~~are~~ have been submitted to the Punjab Government. ~~In the opinion of the Government of India it is a most objectionable production; and~~ I am to suggest for the consideration of H.E. the Govr. in Council, the desirability and feasibility of instituting proceedings under section 124-A I.P.C. against the persons responsible; and of taking prompt action for the proscription of copies under section 99-A of the Code of Cr. Procedure; others of a like nature will

S. 5.

_____ DEPARTMENT.

_____ BRANCH.

File No.

Serial No.

Draft Letter / Memorandum / Telegram

Heading:

Case or Diary No.

Post copy of telegram required

Date of despatch of above

List of enclosures

Class for Telegrams ORDINARY. / EXPRESS.

No. _____ Dated _____ 19 .

To H.

no doubt be similarly dealt with.

Yours sincerely,

(Code word for telegrams.)

Secretary.

S. 5.

D. No. 225-P(o)

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Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press—17-2-1923—1,000.

CONFIDENTIAL.

No. 8444-F- S. B.

FROM

H. D. Craik, Esquire, C.S.I., I.C.S.,
Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab.

To

The Political Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Foreign & Political Department,
D e l h i.

Dated Lahore, *the* 18th March, 192 4

Confidential.

Extract from a letter, dated the 15th March, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division, Lahore.

I have the news from Jaiton proclaimed last night in the city by beat of drum and issued in the form of posters early this morning. Up to 10 o'clock this morning the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee had had no news themselves. People on the whole seem to be relieved that there has been no firing; but Government's supporters are rather nervous lest the negotiations said to be going on about Akhand Path prove to be the first steps in a climb down by Government. I do not read the news this way myself and sincerely trust that their anxiety is groundless.

2. I am not yet in a position to report anything about the departure of the third Jatha. It all depends on what happens at Jaiton. The concentration of Akalis here is beginning according, I suppose, to pre-arranged plan. A large Jatha from Sialkot put at about five hundred is at present passing through the Ajnala tahsil and 25 came in from Montgomery today.

3. The Akali states that on the 13th the Maharaja of Bharatpur accompanied by his staff and by S. Raghbir Singh of Raja Sansi visited the Darbar Sahib. He noticed the collecting boxes for the 5 Paisa Fund and enquired what the object was. On being told, he commanded one of his staff to put in a subscription of Rs. 5/-. That the Maharaja did visit the Darbar Sahib is a fact and my information is that he gave Rs. 225/- to the Har Mandar Sahib and Rs. 225/- to the Golden Temple. If he did subscribe to the 5 Paisa Fund, it was unbecoming on his part to say the least of it. If he did not, I think the Maharaja Sahib might be asked to give publicity to the fact.

4. Maulvi Salam-ud-Din speaking after Friday prayers

in the masjid of Mian Muhammad Jan yesterday took a strong line against the Akali movements and advised Muhammadans to have nothing to do with it whatever. Respectable Muhammadans here are dead against the Akalis.

* * *

.....

We had a separate report
about the maharaja's
shareholders would action
which did have been
sent to FSP Debt. This
did now be done.

J. Crean
20/3/24

My dear Thompson,

As you are aware a certain number of Indian Army Officers were selected by Army Headquarters to go to Jaito and be present at the arrival of the second Shahidi Jatha on the 14th. Various newspaper correspondents accredited by the Punjab Government were also permitted to visit Jaito and in addition to that there were three Members of the Punjab Legislative Council and representatives of the Assembly and Council of State that were selected by the Government of India. The Indian Army Officers arrived at Jaito by midday of the 12th. I had a long conversation with them, I showed them my file with regard to the first Shahidi Jatha, I gave them copies of several of the papers that they were interested in, I took them over to the actual scene of the events of the 21st February and allowed them to examine the arms and the proscribed literature that fell into my hands on the 21st February. I also let them see the statement of Labh Singh the head Granthi and the statement of certain members of the first Shahidi Jatha who had asked to be allowed to give their version of the events of the 21st February. These Indian Army Officers were much impressed with what they saw and stated to me on the evening of the 12th that if these facts were made public the effect should be very considerable. On the next day (i.e. the 13th) the three members of the Punjab Council arrived in Jaito. They were Maqbul Muhammad, elected member from Amritsar, Lala Duni Chand, elected member from Rohtak, Sirdar Jawahar Singh, nominated member from Ambala District. I adopted the same procedure with them that I have described in connection with the Indian Army Officers. While we were going over the ground on which the disturbances of the 21st February took place Bourne, who is about to take over charge of Ferozepore from Coldstream, and Herdon, the police officer who was in command of the armed police that marched with

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the jatha from the time when they entered Ferozepore district arrived to see me. They informed me that the jatha was in a truculent frame of mind and that the crowds who came to meet them were most insolent in their behaviour. Several incidents occurred which indicated that the crowd desired to insult the British Officers, one of which was that cymbals had been clashed under the nose of Herdon's horse obviously with the intention of causing him trouble; pointed remarks had been made to his men to the effect that their proper place was with the jatha and not against it and other incidents of like nature. Both these officers were of opinion that it was likely that a truculent mob would accompany the jatha on its march on the 14th to Jaito. I asked these two officers to repeat to the members of Council, the press reporters and the Indian Officers who were present, what they had told me. These gentlemen were obviously impressed by the narrative and we had a long talk over affairs in consequence. I pointed out the necessity of calling upon the jatha to prevent any mob accompanying it into the Nabha territory and I further called upon them to point out to the jatha, if it came in unaccompanied by any mob that no good purpose could be served by any effort to enter the Gurdwara, that I had sufficient force at my command to make that impossible, that they should point out to the members of the Jatha that they had done their best to fulfil their vow and that it would be a wise move upon their part to submit to arrest quietly and to walk to the prison enclosures without causing any trouble. I subsequently had a long conversation with Maqbul Muhammad and he agreed that he and his colleagues should meet the early morning train on the 14th by which the members of the Assembly and of the Council of State were arriving from Delhi, that he should ask them to come and talk matters over with me without any delay and it was agreed that I should point out to these gentlemen the state of affairs exactly as it

has been pointed out to the members of the Punjab Council. The position on the morning of the 14th was that we had no information as to by which route the jatha would approach Jaito. They were bound to start from their last halting place along the only route that led from there, but after some three miles that route branches off in three directions and it was uncertain along which of these three branches the jatha would proceed. We accordingly established a system of signal posts in order that we might receive the earliest possible information both as to the road that the jatha had committed itself to and also as to the fact as to whether it was accompanied by a mob or not. My plans were that the jatha should be met just inside the boundaries of the State, and if it came alone it should be allowed to proceed to within a short distance of the Gurdwarabefore any definite action was taken, that if it came ~~before any~~ preceding a mob the jatha itself should be allowed to pass through and the road would then be closed to the mob who would be dispersed if necessary and that if it came screened by a mob the mob would be dispersed and the jatha would be allowed to go through. The situation was explained at very considerable length to the members of the Assembly and the Council of State. The Position was discussed from every possible point of view from shortly after 7 a.m. until 11.30 a.m. Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Sinha with Sirdar Kartar Singh and Gulab Singh were the chief spokesmen. They made endeavours to persuade me to allow the jatha to enter the Gurdwara unconditionally upon their guarantee that the jatha would vacate the Gurdwara within a reasonable period. I pointed out to these gentlemen that any such suggestion was out of the question, that the term "reasonable period" was so indeterminate as to be useless as any basis for negotiation, that the Prabhandak Committee would probably consider that a "reasonable period" would be ten months, that these gentlemen themselves might consider "a reasonable

period" to be two or three months but my own opinion was that a period of three days was a more reasonable interpretation of the term. I stated that I was willing to relax the conditions as regards the number of individuals who should be permitted to enter the Gurdwara at one time. I pointed out that the reasons for the numberbeing fixed was purely to enable the authorities to handle the situation if the jatha agreed to the terms as originally offered to them and subsequently, after gaining entrance to the Gurdwara, refused to carry out their agreement. I stated that if reliable guarantees were forthcoming and that if the members of the various Legislative bodies present were of opinion that a larfer number could be allowed into the Gurdwara without any fear of a breach of faith I was prepared to alter the terms of the notice accordingly, but that I must insist upon reliable guarantees on this point and also as to the term laid down that no political matter of any kind or description should be broached during the stay of the jatha in State territory. I stated that the chief point which I must insist on was a definite time limit for the stay of the jatha and that that time limit must be a reasonable one. I asked them to submit any proposals that they considered fair as to this time limit and added that if I agreed that their proposals were fair, I was prepared to refer the matter for the decision of the Government of India provided that they would undertake to hold up the jatha until the Government of India had time to consider the proposition. I impressed upon them that I could not consider any long period and that no negotiations were possible save on the lines of a speedy removal of the jatha from State territory. In spite of the fact that I laid this down as the essential basis for any negotiations the Pandit and those gentlemen to whom I have referred to above as having associated themselves with

him, for four hours put up proposal after proposal which did not comply with the condition that I had laid down. I was asked to allow the jatha to enter the Gurdwara unconditionally and to accept a guarantee that they would effect a settlement. I was asked to agree to the despatch of a telegram to the Prabandhak Committee to the effect that if the authorities agreed to allow the jatha unconditional entrance into the Gurdwara, would the Prabhandak Committee agree to reasonable terms ? I refused to be any party to the despatch of any telegram on such lines. I stated that this contained a "suggestio falsi" that any person reading such a telegram would conclude that I was ready to agree to some settlement on these lines and that I had consistently made it clear that I could not consider any proposal on such lines. The Pandit asked me whether I intended to convey that he was trying to entrap me. I stated that I intended to convey nothing save the fact that the telegram as drafted would mislead any individual who happened to read it. These negotiations continued till 11.30 when I received information from our signalling party that the jatha was unaccompanied by any mob and was definitely committed to a certain route. I thereupon informed the members of the various Legislative bodies that if they intended to assist in the peaceful disposal of the jatha it was time for them toproceed and meet it and make it clear to them that if there was to be any hope of a reasonable settlement the jatha must halt in order to give time for the members of the Assembly and Council of State to approach the Prabhandak Committee, but that I anticipated that the Jatha would state that they had definite orders and had no power to negotiate. I accordingly despatched these gentlemen in motor cars to meet the jatha and proceeded with a portion of the forces at my disposal to meet the

jatha on the borders. Half a mile from the border the jatha halted and information was brought in by a galloper to the effect that the jatha had swung to the West by means of a path through the fields, and intended to approach by another route. The message further assured me that there were no signs of mob in the vicinity. Under these circumstances it seemed to me that it was unnecessary to meet the jatha on the boundaries of the State and I accordingly withdrew the whole of my force to a central position whence we could command all the approaches to the Gurdwara. Dispositions were then made on the assumption that the jatha would come down by the next road to the one that we originally expected to follow. When these dispositions had been completed the Pandit and his companions arrived back from their interview with the jatha. As I had expected, they had received the answer from the jatha that they were under definite orders, that they had no powers to negotiate and that they were under oath to penetrate to the Gurdwara on the 14th of March. Accordingly they refused to halt and give the time necessary for possible negotiations. The Pandit once more returned to the charge and for some considerable time reiterated all previous arguments and demands. He obviously hoped that I would weaken and would yield unconditionally owing to my apprehension of the attitude that he and his colleagues might take up with regard to my refusal to hearken to his blandishments. At 3.30 I received information that the jatha was within half a mile of the place where my forces had been deployed. I accordingly informed the Pandit that nothing further remained for him and his companionsto do but to meet the jatha and impress upon them that in marching to Jaito as they had done, they had done their best to fulfil the oath which they had sworn, that the Pandit and his companions were satisfied that I had sufficient forces at my disposal to make it impossible for the jatha to

enter the Gurdwara and that therefore no good purpose could be served by any further attempt to do so. I asked him, therefore, to persuade the jatha to accept the inevitable, to submit to arrest and to proceed quietly to the pens that had been prepared for their reception. The Pandit replied that he could not reconcile it with his conscience to ask these 500 Sikh martyrs to resile from the oath which they had sworn in their most holy shrine. My rejoinder was to the effect that I wondered how he could reconcile it with his conscience to ask me to betray the trust that had been given me to look after the interests of the large number of Sikhs of the Jaito Ilaqa and that under the circumstances I must ask him and his companions to withdraw, to leave me uninterrupted and to watch subsequent proceedings from some little distance and I proceeded forthwith to meet the jatha. I was pursued by Mr. Sinha who called out that he had been entrusted by the Pandit and others to deliver a letter to me. I informed Mr. Sinha that I regretted that I had no time to read any letter as the arrival of the jatha required my immediate presence and that if he would keep the letter and deliver it afterwards I would be glad to receive it. I would here like to note that Mr. Sinha shortly before this had produced a document and had requested one of the members of the Punjab Council, (I think that member was Sirdar Jawahar Singh) to sign it. This gentlemen stated that he had not read the document and that he desired to read it before signing it. Mr. Sinha replied that there was no time for him to peruse it and that he would be glad if he would sign it unread. This request of Mr. Sinha's was refused by that member. This incident occurred in my presence. To resume, I proceeded to where the State forces were drawn up to receive the jatha. After a further wait of about 15 minutes a Sowar brought in news to the effect that the jatha after having once more halted had again swung to

the west by a small path which led down to the canal which runs from North to South just within the Faridkot boundaries and that it was obvious that their intention was to approach Jaito along the Kot Kapura-Jaito road. I accordingly moved the State forces once more to meet them upon this road. While this was going on Pandit Malaviya once more approached me and stated that he desired to enter an emphatic protest against the presence of armed military forces. I informed the Pandit that I had already requested him to withdraw and leave me unfettered to deal with the jatha, that one of the conditions upon which he had been allowed to visit Jaito was that he would obey any orders that I issued to him and that as he had not complied with my request I was forced to order him to withdraw and view subsequent proceedings from such a distance as would prevent him from interfering with me in the execution of my duties and he accordingly withdrew. As the jatha approached I decided that I would make one more effort to persuade its members to submit to arrest and to walk quietly to the temporary jail prepared for them. I accordingly advanced to meet them and when some 30 yards from them I held up my hand and called on the jatha to halt as I desired to speak to them. I believed it possible that I would be able to cause them to halt. My reasons for this belief were that their constant changes of route and the unnecessary prolongation of their march tended to show that they were somewhat apprehensive of the manner of their reception. My hopes were justified and the jatha came to a halt. I then requested them to select two or three of their number to come forward and speak to me assuring them that I would not arrest them apart from the rest of the jatha and that they would be at liberty to rejoin their companions when I had finished my conversation with them. Three men were selected by the jatha and I pointed out to them the

futility of any attempt on their part to enter Gurdwara and also the fact that they would save themselves and me considerable trouble if they submitted peacefully to arrest realising that they had done their best to fulfil their vow. I told them that I did not desire any reply from them without consultation with their confreres. They returned to the main body of the jatha and were joined there by Maqbul Muhammad and Sirdars Kartar Singh and Gulab Singh. I should like here to acknowledge the very real help that Maqbul Muhammad and Sirdar Gulab Singh afforded me at this stage. Both gentlemen did their utmost to bring the jatha to reason and their efforts were successful. I am afraid that I cannot say the same of Sirdar Kartar Singh. After some little time I was informed by these gentlemen that the jatha had seen reason and were prepared to accept the inevitable, to submit quietly to arrest and to walk to the pens that I had prepared for them, but that they desired my permission to take the Granth Sahib with them to the jail. My answer was to the effect that I had no objection to any such procedure provided that they presented a written request to that effect and that that request was attested by some of the members of the Legislative bodies who were present. I added that I was forced to ask for this written request in view of the fact that it was not unlikely that the Sikh community as a whole would accuse me of having insulted their Granth Sahib by arresting it. This written request was prepared by one of the members of the jatha and was attested by Maqbul Muhammad and Sirdars Kartar Singh and Gulab Singh. I then asked those members of the jatha, with whom I have previously conversed, as to whether it was necessary for me to formally arrest the whole of the 500 or whether it would suffice if I laid my hand upon them and informed them that they and their companions were all under arrest. They

said that there was no necessity forthe formal arrest of all the members. I thereupon laid my hand upon two of the leaders and declared that they and their companions were under arrest, and that they should follow me to the fort where they would be accommodated temporarily. I pointed out to them that they had asked that the jatha should all be imprisoned together, that the pens I had prepared were intended to accommodate 250 individuals only that if all 500 were accommodated in one pen there would be considerable overcrowding, but that if they so desired I would allow them all to be confined together. They stated that they would rather submit to discomfort than to separation, and accordingly I gave the necessary orders. I thereupon marched at the head of the jatha which with the Panj Piara and flag bearers preceding the Granth Sahib followed me in a column of fours to the pen inside the fort. The members of the jatha entered without causing any trouble. A Shamiana was given them to erect over the Granth Sahib and a small platform was supplied for them to place the Granth Sahib upon. Arrangements for food and water were made and for the supply of additional tents. Some 4 hours later it was reported to me that an individual had appeared and stated that he was also a member of the Shahidi jatha that owing to his fear that the jatha might be fired upon he had deserted and had hidden himself that now as he had ascertained that there had been no foundation for his fear he desired to rejoin his companions. I accordingly gave orders that he should be confined with them. I had requested the authorities of Ferozepore district and Faridkot State to close all drink and drug shops in the vicinity of the jatha's final marches and I believe that this measure was greatly responsible for the reasonable attitude of the members of the jatha, that attitude was very different to the one adopted by the first jatha. In addition to

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the gentlemen whom I have already mentioned as being present at Jaito I should like to acknowledge the services of Sardar Bahadur, Kartar Singh of Sargodha, of Honorary Captain Kishen Singh, and Honorary Lieutenant Thakur Singh, both late of the 36th Sikhs and residents of the Ludhiana district. These gentlemen who were convinced of the reasonableness of the attitude of the State authorities were most helpful throughout. My special thanks are also due to the three members of the Punjab Legislative Council. In conclusion I would desire that the services of Colonel Gregson, Superintendent of Police of Ferozepore district should be specially acknowledged. Colonel Gregson was allowed by the Punjab Government to assist me in the period between the 21st of February and the 14th of March in addition to carrying on his general duties as Superintendent of Police of Ferozepore. This officer as a result was seriously overworked during that period. His help to me was invaluable. He never spared himself either in the investigation of the cases that arose out of the incidents of February 21st, nor in his efforts to obtain reliable information as to the attitude of the public in the Ferozepore district while his advice was at all times valuable. Colonel Gregson received no kind of pecuniary recognition for the extra work that this double duty threw upon him, and I would like to emphasise the fact that without the benefit of his experience as a Police Officer, it would have been impossible for me with the staff at my disposal to have expedited the preparation of these various cases which were of a peculiarly complicated nature. I would therefore ask that Colonel Gregson's services should receive special recognition.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- J. Wilson-Johnston

Confidential.

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No. 8444-F-S.B.

Dated Lahore, the 19th March 1924

Subject:- Programmes of the 3rd and 4th "Shahidi Jathas" for Jaiton.

My dear Thompson,

I am desired to forward herewith for the information of the Government of India copies of programmes of the third and fourth "Shahidi Jathas" leaving Amritsar and Anandpur (Hoshiarpur district) for Jaiton on the 22nd and 27th March 1924, respectively.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. G. F. Cocks.

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J.P.Thompson, C.I., I.C.S.,
Political Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign and Political Department,
Delhi.

Programme of the 3rd and 4th "Shahidi Jathas" leaving Amrit and Anandpur respectively for Jaiton.

THIRD SHAHIDI JATHA.

1924.

22nd March	Leave Amritsar	
" "	Mananwala	Amritsar district.
23rd "	Chhajal Wadhi	
24th "	Chima Bath	
25th "	Ramidi	Kapurthala State.
26th "	Kartarpur	Jullundur district.
27th "	Adampur	
28th "	Jullundur	
29th "		
30th "	Jandiala	
31st "	Pawadri	
1st April	Gora Khan	
2nd "	Jagraon	Ludhiana district.
3rd "	Bahbar	
4th "	Rao-ka-Kalan	
5th "	Sangatpura	
6th "	Wather	Ferozepore district.
7th "	Jaiton.	

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FOURTH SHAHIDI JATHA.

1924.

27th March	Leave Kesgarh (Anandpur, Hoshiarpur District).	
" "	Khurjian	Hoshiarpur district.
28th "	Kukar Majra	
29th "	Chabalpore	
30th "	Mahilpore	
31st "	Haryan Bala	
1st April	Pur Hiran	
2nd "	Phagwara	Kapurthala State.
3rd "	Pharala	Jullundur District.
4th "		
5th "	Dosanj Kalan	
6th "	Barapind	
7th "	Phillaur	
8th "	Ludhiana	Ludhiana District.
9th "	Raipur	
10th "	Bakhowal	
11th "	Raikot	
12th "		
13th "	Hatur Khas	Faridkot State.
14th "	Nanaksar	
15th "	Dina	
16th "	Bhagta	
17th "	Baja Khas	
18th "	Jaiton	

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7 + P. Dent. may be.
then this.
L. Crewe
13/3

This is enclosed to
Bot Soc but I have read it
with great interest
E. Hatch
20/3

P.S. Has known the type so
well.
H.H.

H Thompson

20/13

Seen & returned.
Crewe
22. 3. 24

Mr Richter
W.O. 20.A.23(-7(c) dd. 24/3/24

Confidential

No. 7151.

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Punjab Civil Secretariat,

Lahore, dated 7. 3. 1924.

My dear Sir Malcolm,

I enclose a copy of a confidential letter dated the 4th of March, 1924, from Major Ivens, Recruiting Officer, Jullundur, to the Commissioner of the Jullundur Division, together with a copy of its enclosure, which, I think, may interest you.

Yours sincerely,

H D Craik

To/

The Hon. Sir Malcolm Hailey
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Home Member, H.E. the Viceroy's Executive Council,
Delhi.

-(S.A. Shah)-

Copy of a letter dated 4th March, 1924, from Major H.T.C. Ivens to Commissioner, Jullundur.

I send the enclosed notes down. These are notes ~~taken by~~ Captain Barlow, Assistant Recruiting Officer, of a conversation he had with a personal friend of his (and mine) on his way back from Ferozepore last night. The remarks were made by a Sikh, who is incidentally a King's Commission, and the Col: Commandant agrees with me ~~that~~ you would like to see them before you go to Ludhiana

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Details of a conversation held with a loyal and well educated Sikh on 3. 3. 1924.

He expressed himself as most concerned regarding the situation which had arisen out of the Jaiton affair, and the despatch of the second "Shahidi Jatha". In this connection he stated that he was in Amritsar on Thursday, 28th February, the day the second "Shahidi Jatha" marched, and added that he was astounded at the high feeling prevailing in the city. He estimated that there were about one hundred thousand (probably overestimated) in and around the "Darbar Sahib" on that day, and he was convinced that their enthusiasm regarding the departure of the "jatha" was deep seated and genuine. He told me that what struck him most was that the greater part of the crowd was composed of zemindar Sikhs, men with some stake in the country. He emphasized the fact that agriculturists, all the world over, were notoriously easy to lead, but added that this type was also inclined to nurse a grievance and hold on to it with greater tenacity, especially one concerning their religion, than any other class of the community. He told me that he only raised this point because he thought before Govt. decided to proceed with a policy of repression by force, the effect of such a policy upon the character of the people with whom the Govt. was dealing, (a thick headed but martially inclined peasantry) should be very seriously considered.

He again laid stress on the effect on his opinions, as given above, which had been produced by his visit to Amritsar and his estimate of the character of the crowd assembled there.

He gave voice to his apprehensions that the "S.G.P.C." in furthering its political aims by investing them with a cloak of religion, had so imbued the minds of the peasantry with its religious propaganda

as to weaken the committee's control to such an extent, that there was a likelihood of the movement getting entirely out of the "S.G.P.C's" control, if it had not done so already.

He was of opinion that it was essential to humour the religious feeling now prevailing, even if it meant giving way a trifle for the time being.

In any case he hoped that there would be no firing on the second "jatha", as he was definitely nervous of the effect it might have. Informant had been reading Lord Olivier's statement with great interest, and was inclined to think, with Lord Curzon, that a grave misunderstanding had arisen between the Government and the Sikhs, due to a mistaken policy on the part of the Govt. Asked to give an instance of this "mistaken policy", he gave as an example the forbidding the entry of the Akali Sikhs to the Gangsar Gurdwara in the first instance. He considered they ought to have been allowed to enter and perform their devotions, after being warned that they would be arrested if they attempted to convert a religious "diwan" into a political meeting. This might have put a stop to the subsequent attempts to force an entry into the Gurdwara.

Informant gave it as his private opinion that a great deal of misunderstanding at the present time was due to the fact that Sikh advisers to the Government of India failed to represent correctly to the Viceroy, the Sikh side of the questions involved, and the effect the Government's policy was having on the Sikhs of the Punjab. He gave as an example Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, whom he represented as a sycophant on the look out for a Knighthood.

The conversation was most interesting to me as my companion is a reserved sort of man, seldom given to expressing himself on subjects such as those outlined above.

CONFIDENTIAL.

D.O.No. 474-R
N.30/24.

Dated Lahore, the 21st March, 1924.

My dear Thompson,

Please refer to my confidential demi-official letter No. 54-C, N-30/24, dated the 14th March 1924, regarding the Jaito Morcha.

I have not yet been able to obtain any confirmation of the report referred to in the last paragraph on my secret telegram No.431-R dated the 16th March 1924, but there is no doubt that two Jathas are being despatched to Jaito, one from Amritsar, leaving on the 22nd March and arriving at Jaito on the 7th April, and another leaving Anandpur on the 27th March and reaching Jaito on the 18th April. I had a talk with H.E. the Governor on the subject, yesterday, and gathered that the Punjab Government did not contemplate any interference with these jathas, which will apparently be allowed to march unmolested to Jaito. I advanced, what appeared to me, to be cogent reasons why the two jathas should be dealt with in British India, but His Excellency's view was that, although much harm is done amongst the rural Sikhs in the area contiguous to the routes followed by the Jathas, the harm is only transient, and the disadvantages of holding up the jathas in British India outweigh the advantages.

The situation appears to me, and to the Rulers of the States concerned, to be so serious that I feel it is my duty to address you at length on the subject. As you know, I was in favour of allowing the first two jathas to march through to Jaito, in order that the Sikhs might know that Government did not intend to place any unnecessary restrictions on their religious observances, but the manner in which the concessions has been abused has caused me to

to alter my ideas on the subject. In view of the experie that has now been gained, it seems to me that the objection to allowing the uninterrupted passage of any more jathas to Jaito are so enormous as to outweigh in a most decisive manner any apparent advantages.

The Jathas are intended to inspire hatred towards the British Government in every possible way among the rural population of the areas traversed. These jathas, marching in military formation through British India, preceded by the Granth Sahib and the "Panj Piare" with drawn swords, are having a very bad effect on the villagers, who come in contact with them." A Sikh is a most stubborn individual, who respects no one but the man with a cudgel, which he is prepared to use. He cannot understand any one with a weapon, not using it when the occasion arises, and his only education is that the man is afraid to come to blows. He cannot understand leniency, which he would always regard as weakness. For instance, the real reason why the Sikhs fought so well for the British in the Mutiny was that they had just been beaten in the Sikh Wars, and those who are acquainted with their character know that the only way to deal with them is to be strong and to make them understand that no nonsense will be allowed. Thus, the effect on the simple-minded Sikh villagers of the incursions of jatha after jatha, with their threats, vapourings, and lies, can easily be imagined, and the value which the extremist leaders attach to this form of propaganda is shown by the way in which they are varying the routes of the next two jathas in order to infect new areas with seditious ideas. It is important to note, moreover, that one of the jathas now about to start, will traverse the countr which has recently been troubled, by the Babar Akali activities. There is no reason to anticipate that the S.G.P.C. or those who are at the back of the extremist movement amongst the Sikhs will voluntarily renounce the holding of "morchas", since their hold on the Sikhs in general depends on their pursuing an active anti-British policy.

The leaders of the movement have nothing to lose; the loss falls on the ignorent villagers, who are being deceived by the lies that are so sedulously propagated. Thus, the more often the presence of an armed Sangat with a jatha makes it necessary for the British authorities to resort to force, the more pleased the extremist leaders will be. Each occasion affords a splendid opportunity for disseminating more lies and inculcating more hatred. If the process is allowed to continue long enough, Government will have most of the Sikhs against them, as even the moderates have been to a large extent deceived by the misrepresentations of the Akali leaders concerning the religious nature of the struggle. Thus, unless a different policy is adopted, the time is bound to come, sooner or later, when the Sikhs in British India will be wrought up to the pitch of rising against Government. The more the parcharaka preach in the villages and the more the propagandists disseminate their lies, the deeper will become the hatred implanted in the minds of the rural population. As the Governor, says, it is impossible that the mental disturbance produced in the incursion of the jathas may subside for the time being, but the effect on the minds of the villagers is not effaced, and should, s rising occur the latent hatred would quickly be fanned into a flame that it would be difficult to put out. Of course I do not think for a moment that a rising of the Sikhs would have any chance of success, as it would most probably find no sympathy with the Hindus and Mohammadans, but it would necessitate bloodshed and give fresh stirulus to racial hatred; so it is only fair to the Sikhs themselves that the causes , which are contributing towards such an untoward result, should be eradicated whilst there is yet time.

In addition to the considerations advanced above, it may be urged that it is not equitable that a small State like Nabha should be made to bear the burden that should be undertaken by the Punjab Government. The Governor has contended in conversation with me that the Jaito Morcha is entirely

entirely due to the separation of the Maharaja of Nabha from his State, but an unprejudiced observer must admit from a study of the causes that have led up to the present situation in the Punjab that the extremist leaders seized the opportunity of holding a morcha at Jaito for exactly the same reason that led them to initiate the struggle at Guru-ka-Bagh and Bhai Pheru, namely, the desire to enter into a conflict with Government on any pretext, especially if it could be given a religious semblance. The root of the whole trouble is the forbearance of the Punjab Government in allowing the Akalis forcibly to seize shrines and utilise their revenues for anti-British purposes. On this point all the rulers and the responsible State officials, with whom I have come in contact, are unanimous. Similarly they are all agreed that the only way of dealing with the situation is to deprive the Akalis of the Sikh Shrines and their revenues, which should be placed under proper supervision, and to put a stop to the Jatha-bandi system in the Punjab. His Excellency told me yesterday that the opinion had been expressed by moderates amongst the Sikhs that the Government should make the jatha bande system illegal, but, as a sop, should allow the Akalis to have their way in regard to the Gangsar Gurdwara. In my opinion a compromise of this desc iption would provide no alleviation of the situation. As long as the Akalis are in possession of annual revenues to the extent of about twenty lakhs of rupees from the shrines, which they can use without let or hindrance for propaganda purposes, there will be no cessation of the anti-Government campaign. If Jathas are stopped, the number of preachers and seditious agents will be enormously increased, and the campaign of vilification and misrepresentation will go on under the surface. Money is the crux of the whole question. The Akali leaders are unlikely to obtain funds by public subscription, and had it not been for the action of the Punjab Government in allowing the Akalis to seize the revenues

revenues of the Nankana Sahib, Taran Taran and other rich shrines, the situation would not be nearly so serious as it is. If these revenues are allowed to remain in the hands of the extremist leaders, the Sikhs are bound to become more and more bitter, and their hatred more and more intense, until the time is thought to be ripe for the re-conquest of the Punjab.

After the fullest consultation with the Sikh Darbars, the action I would advise is

(1) The formation in Nabha of a Council of Administration according to the Dastur-ul-Amal, with Wilson Johnston as Political Agent. This would probably produce a lull in the political situation, as the Akali leaders would have to revise their policy to meet the change of front.

(2) The issue of an ordinance rendering jatha-bandi illegal. By Jatha-bande I mean the system of maintaining bodies of men on an organised basis, who take their orders froma central authority and march about the country in quasi-military formation under the orders of their jathedars.

(3) The passing of a legislative enactment to deprive the Akalis of the shrines they have seized and the revenues they are misusing.

It is possible that the last two measures may give rise to disturbances, but they are not likely to be so bad as the trouble that will ensue later on if the present propagandism letter dwelt upon the hardships that the Jaito morcha will involve on the troops, if the despatch of Jathas continues.

In addition, it must be remembered that the morcha also inflicts hardships on the people of Jaito, whose crops have been injured by the advance of the Sangat on the 21st February and by the military operations that have been necessitated, whilst the feeling of insecurity that has been engendered is shown by the removal of women and funds from the town of Jaito, and by the fact that marriages which woul

would have been performed there, have been celebrated at other places. If the morcha goes on much longer, the prosperous Mandi is likely to become depopulated. Moreover, the attention of the Administrator and his officials, instead of being directed to repairing the neglect of the past twelve years is engaged entirely in dealing with the Jatha; the State revenues are being largely utilised to meet the expenditure connected with morcha, and the State administration is thus being disorganised. Arrangements have been made to keep the first two jathas in custody for the present, but it is difficult to see how the next two jathas can be disposed of, as the Punjab Government will probably be unable to provide any jail establishment to look after the prisoners. I Understood that even the 26 warders that have been provided to deal with the second jatha have only been supplied with the greatest difficulty, and that it will be impossible to furnish any further establishment. Thus, if the next two jathas are to be kept in custody, as logically they ought to be, it will be necessary to obtain a jail staff from some other local Government. Furthermore, the establisment of additional jails for the accomodation of the large number of prisoners composing the various jathas requires the presence of military guards in addition to the jail staff, and it will not be easy to provide them.

There is one other aspect of the question that I should like to mention, namely, the association of His Highness the Maharaja of Nabha with the S.G.P.C. and its emissaries. There is no doubt that since his departure from Nabha, his highness has been in constant touch with the S.G.P.C., at whose disposal he has placed all his papers. I am also informed that he has been assisting them largely with funds. I would strongly urge that opportunity be taken of the Maharaja's breach of certain of his engagements which is now under the consideration of the Government of India, to secure His Highness' removal from Dehra Dun to

to Bellary or some other suitable place down-country, where he will be less accessible to the Sikh seditionists.

Yours sincerely,

SD/- A.B.MINCHIN.

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J.P. Thompsson, C.S.I., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
in the Foreign and Political Department.

D.O. No.Camp/ 82.

Office of the Administrator,
(Nabha State),

Camp Jaito,

Dated, March 22, 1924.

My dear Minchin,

This morning 13 members of the daily Jatha of 25 Akalis that reached here upon the 20th asked to be allowed to be taken out to answer a call of nature. They were accordingly taken out to the North-East side of the Railway Line for that purpose. All 13 of them insisted upon bathing in the canal minor which flows in the vicinity. Three lads aged about 16 refused to leave the water and ran up and down the bank jumping into the water. Finally only two of them returned. It was them discovered that the 3rd was missing and his dead body was found under a culvert where there is a siphon. He was evidently drawn into the siphon and there drowned.

A magisterial enquiry was held upon the spot and facts are perfectly clear. A statement has been recorded by the remaining 12 men of the bathing party to the effect that this youth refused to obey the orders of the Police man and was accidentally drowned. This statement has been addressed to the jathedars at Muktsar. None of the members of the Jatha have any idea as to who the lad in question is. I am sending copies of this direct to Thompson and to Craik for information. A translation of the statement from the Jatha here for the Jathadar at Muktsar is as follows:-.

"To the Manager, Muktsar.

"This is to inform you that on the 22nd we "
"went to bathe in the canal minor. Hari "
"Singh started playing the fool "
"(Shaitani Karta Tha(He was "
"drowned under the bridge and died. The "

"The rest of us were seated on the minor"
"reciting our prayers. This is the Jatha"
"that left Muktsar on the 18th and reached"
"Jaito on the 20th.

"SD/- Sucha Singh Jathadar and
other members of the Jatha".

It might be wise to publish the actual facts as soon as possible as it is more than likely that the Parbandhak Committee will make attempts to cause trouble over the matter.

I have given orders in future that if bathing is allowed it should be permitted to only two or three men at a time, so that no similar incidents can occur in future.

Yours sincerely,

SD/- J. Wilson-Johnston.

Lt. Col A.B.Minchin, C.I.E.
A.G.G. Punjab, States, Lahore.

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Confidential

No. 9101

Punjab Civil Secretariat,
Lahore, dated 25. 3. 1924.

1107 Secl.

My dear Crerar,

I am directed to forward for the information of the Government of India a copy of two circular letters dated the 23rd and 24th of March issued by the Commissioner of the Jullundur Division to the Deputy Commissioners in his division regarding the steps to be taken in connection with the march of the third and fourth "Shahidi jathas" through the Jullundur Division.

2. The third "jatha", which left Amritsar on the 22nd, is due to arrive at Jaiton on the 7th of April. The fourth "jatha" is to leave Anandpur in the Hoshiarpur district on the 27th of March and is due to arrive at Jaiton on the 18th of April.

Yours sincerely,

H.D. Craik

To/

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Home Department,
Delhi.

-(S.A.Shah)-

Copy of a D.O. letter No.C-142-Cir: dated 23.3.24 from Commissioner, Jullundur Division, to all D.Cs in his division except D.C.Kangra

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I asked Govt. for power to break up "jathas" proceeding through this Division by various routes to Jaiton. In reply I have received the following orders from Govt. which should be observed:--

" Orders are that "jathas" should be allowed to proceed to Jaiton without hindrance and Govt. of India adhere to existing attitude regarding Jaiton. Dy.Commrs should, if opportunity offers, proceed under sec.107 Cr.P.C. against individual members of "Shahidi jathas" who are found making seditious speeches or disseminating literature likely to disturb public tranquility. In bad cases application may subsequently be made for prosecution under section 124 A I.P.C. Arrangements will be made for troops to accompany "jathas" for last two or three marches before Jaiton to keep off "Sangat".

D.O.
Copy of a/letter No.C 148-C dated 24.3.24 from Commr. Jullundur, to D.Cs Jullundur and Hoshiarpur

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In continuation of my D.O. No.C-142-Cir: dated March the 23rd, 1924, with which I communicated to you the orders of Govt. as to the procedure to be followed in dealing with the "jathas", I send the following subsidiary instructions.

A force of 20 or 30 additional mounted police - as many as you can raise in the short time available, but not more than 30 - should accompany the "jathas" in their march through your district under the charge of a responsible officer. Some 10 or 15 additional foot police should also go. A first class magistrate should also accompany them. He should take careful notes of everything done by the "jatha", speeches made by them, the attitude to them of the people, and the like, and you will of course use these magistrates as regards the employment of section 107 Cr.P.C, or 124A I.P.C. in accordance with the orders of Govt. These police and magistrates should be carefully instructed not to hinder the "jathas" so long as the instructions of Govt. already given to you, are complied with. The less they have to do with them the better. If "diwans" are held, the magistrate and reporters will take notes of all that is said. They should insist on being treated with respect due to Govt. officers. They must, however, show tact in this, as actual conflicts on this point with the organizers of "diwans" must be avoided.

145

Sent 26/3.

Copies & T. & P. Dept.
P. Cred.
26/3

Sir A. Mudaliar (after is rec
27/3

Sec Com
26/3

Following telegram received by Simla office to-day

Begins.- From Magistrate with Jatha Jullunder 28th
3rd Jatha arrived Khurdpur near Azampur 27th ever
Spectators 4,000. Accompanied Sangat 200. Marked
enthusiasm prevailed and general impression
created most unfavourable.

1452

Telephonic message from Simla, dated the 27th March 1924.

The following telegram was received by Simla Office this morning from the Magistrate with Jatha dated Jullunder, 26th March.

Begins:- Third Shahidi Jatha from Amritsar reached Kartarpur 26th afternoon. Spectators about 2,000. Accompanied Sangat 200. No particular excitement. No seditious propaganda. Ends.

Telegram is being sent by post.

Copy of Rai Sahib Bhagwan Das' report, dated the 25th March 1924.

143

...is sent to F. & P. Depth: ...l also.

A.D.(A.) may see. Typed copy may go to Home Depth., today.

sd/- Ajjaji.
26/3/24.

A.D.(A).

sd/- W. J. Cleary.
25.3.24.

H.D. (Mr. Gwynne)

D.O. No: 2/N.S./24. dt:- 25.3.24.

for Secy's perusal

C. Gwynne
25/3/24

Secy

The Hon. Mr. Thompson
I do not
think see.
contain a matter which
to any Dept.
to refer

J. Crerar

Marked. I.B. sent 25/3/24
me a copy yesterday.

W. Thompson.
25/3

SECRET

1444

Information has been received from a source, on which full reliance cannot be placed, that Maharaja Ripudaman Singh is planning an extensive scheme to force the hands of the Government to reinstate him into the Nabha gaddi. My informant says that having realised that the present Akali agitation though it has involved the Government in some trouble and created for it a somewhat awkward situation is not likely to do him much good eventually, and therefore it should either be supplemented or substituted by some other activity of a more serious character. With this object the Maharaja is reported to have planned to win the Sikhs serving in the Army to his side and by working through emissaries or otherwise, among units in which Sikhs are employed, induce them all to lay down their arms or take some other concerted action on a fixed day. By this the Maharaja expects that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will be obliged to put pressure upon the Government of India to reconsider the decision about His Highness and that Government will either have to rescind its action about him or face with a very serious situation in the Indian Army.

It is also proposed at the same time to plan the murder of some high European officials who have been particularly enimical to the Maharaja and my informant says that Col. Minchin, the Agent to the Governor-General for Punjab State and Mr. Thompson, Political Secretary to the Government of India and some others have already been marked. These murders will be committed about the same time as the movement about Sikh troops is expected to come to a head and Maharaja Ripudaman Singh expects that if these schemes are successful, they would, together with the present Akali trouble and the state of political

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unrest in India, either lead to a general rising in which the Maharaja would be prepared to take his chance at the head of Akali forces, or at least the Government would be faced with such an embarrassment that it would listen to proposals for a settlement in his favour more readily. My informant adds that the scheme about tampering with Sikh soldiers has made some progress and that some emissaries have already been despatched, and three chief agents who are working for the Maharaja are said to be Sardar Prem Singh, the Father-in-law (father of the 2nd Maharani) of His Highness, a Vakil of Dera Dun and an ex-army officer who has been in charge of the Maharaja's property in Mussoorie.

The source of this information being what has been described in the beginning, this report is submitted for what it may be worth. Another report received from another source is that some agents of the Maharaja are busy securing signatures of various people to a mass memorial to be presented to the Government for reinstatement of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh and that Suban Singh Rabi, an old propaganda agent of His Highness has been busy doing this in various places in the Punjab.

sd/- Bhagwan Das

25.3.24

Copy of a letter from the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, Lahore, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, No. 9451, dated the 27th March 1924.

I am desired to enclose an abstract of information received as to the progress of the third "Shahidi Jatha" in the Amritsar and Jullunder districts between 23rd and 26th March.

A copy of the abstract has been sent direct to Thompson and to Minchin.

ABSTRACT.

The third 'Shahidi Jatha' reached Chajjalwadi (Amritsar district) via Jandiala on 23rd March. It was fed at Jandiala, and met with a good reception at Chajjalwadi, where about 5,000 people were present. Most of these spectators left immediately, but about 2,000 remained for two "diwans" which were held in the evening. The speeches at the "diwans" were provocative but hardly seditious. One speaker who embarked on seditious topics was silenced, and told that such speaking was against the orders of the S.G.P.Committee. On the morning of the 24th after a third "diwan", the "jatha" left for China Bath (Amritsar district). About 1,000 spectators accompanied it. It is reported (by telegram) to have reached Kartarpur (Jullunder district) on the afternoon of the 26th March. At Kartarpur the number of spectators was about 2,000, and of the accompanying "sangat" about 200. There was no particular excitement, and no seditious speaking. The name of the "Jathedar" is given as Hari Singh.

Telegram dated the 30th March 1924.
Magistrate,
From Hoshiarpur City.

4th Jatha from Bulandpur reached Jaipur evening 29th. 2000 spectators Sangat accompanying 40. Excitement usual. Seditious propaganda normal.

Telegram dated the 30th March 1924.
From Magistrate, Jullundur City.

3rd Shahidi Jatha from Amritsar halted at Jullundur City on the 29th March. Diwan held with audience of 5000. Excitement considerable. Several objectionable speaches made and strong propaganda work being carried on.

Telegram dated the 29th March 1924.
From Magistrate, Gorakhpur.

Kukar Majra evening 28th. 1200 spectators Sangat accompanying . Excitement usual. Seditious propaganda normal.

1118 — 15

Issued to Press today
Copy for Home Dept.
G.A.C.
28.3.24

Home Dept
Invite Mr Crear
Place on file
1. crear
2/3

A third Akali Jatha left Amritsar on the 22nd March for Jaito which it is expected to reach on the 7th April. It is understood that the object of this Jatha is the same as that of the two previous Jathas which arrived at Jaito on the 21st February and the 14th March. On the previous occasions the Jathas on arrival within 3 or 4 marches from Jaito were informed that they would be permitted to visit the Gurdwara in batches of 50 at a time for the purpose of holding the Akhand Path on the understanding that on the conclusion of the same they would depart from the State forthwith and that during their stay in the State no political speeches would be made or meetings held. The number to be admitted at one time was fixed at 50 because it was felt that in the confined space available the admission of a larger number might involve difficulties of control should the members of the jatha after gaining admission to the Shrine refuse to observe the undertakings on which they had obtained permission to enter. On the arrival of the jatha on March 14th, however, the Nabha authorities announced that they would allow a larger number than 50 to enter provided that they received satisfactory guarantees that the Jatha would leave the Gurdwara after performing one Akhand Path - a time limit of 3 days was suggested - that no political speeches or propaganda would be allowed inside the Gurdwara and that immediately on conclusion of the religious ceremony the Jatha should leave the Nabha State territory. The Nabha State authorities propose to make a similar announcement to the Jatha, which is now on its way, when it arrives within a short distance of Jaito.

Please see paragraph 3 of your telegram No. 747-S, dated 13th April. H.E.Observes that even if fifth Jatha does not materialise, the route via Faridkot State has obviously been decided on by the Akali authorities as a desirable route and will be taken by some Jatha in the near future.

For this reason H. E. considers that it will be necessary for the Faridkot Administration to come to a final conclusion at an early date whether they anticipate such serious trouble from the progress of a Jatha through the State as to render it imperative to divert it from this route. H. E. also desires to receive the considered opinion of the A. G. G. Punjab States on any view expressed by the Faridkot Administration.

In the event of the A. G. G. supporting a view expressed by that Administration that it is imperatively necessary to prevent a Jatha from entering that State, the possible lines of action will have to be considered and H. E. wishes them to be carefully examined beforehand. H. E. presumes that one possible line is for the Faridkot Administration to request the British authorities to warn a Jatha bent on this route, while in British territory, that they will not be allowed to enter the State and to ask the British authorities to take action to prevent them from doing so. Notice of the wishes of the Faridkot Administration would then presumably be served on them by the District Magistrate of some British District, who would at the same time advise the Jatha to adopt another route. If this Jatha, as is probable, refused to adopt another route, what action is the District Magistrate concerned to take ? Can he take action under Section 144, C.P.C. and prohibit further advance along a route which will lead them into Faridkot State territory? H. E. desires this possibility to be examined and wishes the various suggestions regarding action and solutions proposed to be brought to his notice.

Sd.G.F.deMontmorency.

14.4.24

150 164

Copy to Home Department- with Blue slip- for discussion tomorrow.

Sd. J. P. Thompson.

17-4-24.

151 165

383.

Telegram ------ P.

From ----- The A.G.G. Punjab States, Jaito.

To ----- The Political Secy to the Govt. of India
in the Foreign and Pol. Dept., Delhi.

Dated the 21st (recd. 22nd) February 1924.

Clear the line.

This afternoon an advance was made on Jaito by the martyr Jatta who were covered by about 5,000 other Akalis. It became necessary to fire on them and the casualties are estimated at 34 wounded and 14 killed. So far as is at present known there are no casualties in Jaita. The holy book is respected. I shall arrive on Friday morning at Delhi main.

(Copies to P.S.V., Home Dept. & G.S.B.)

152 166-2

Telegram P.

From - Viceroy (Home Department).

To - Secretary of State.

No. S.233(Poll). Dated the 22nd February 1924.

Priority. Jatha of five hundred persons accompanied by crowd of Akalis estimated at over six thousand reached Jaito in Nabha yesterday. Latter were armed with some firearms and axes. They attempted to force passage to Gurdwara and attacked state officials and troops firing repeatedly at latter. Troops were obliged to reply with fire which was carefully controlled. Akalis finally dispersed with loss of fourteen killed. No member of actual Jatha was injured.

.....

167 3

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Telegram P.

From :- The Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Home Department.

To :- The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Repeated to :- A.G.G., Punjab States,
Lahore.

No. D/709.

Dtaed Delhi the 23rd February 1924.

Appreciation of effects of news of occurrences at Jaitho should be reported to the Government of India with least possible delay. Press reports state that preparations for despatch of another and larger Jatha are being made. Have you any authentic news of this and if so, does decision of conference held by His Excellency on the 6th February at Lahore that second Jatha would be dealt with in British India hold good ? Government of India are considering whether, in interests of Public and with view to reduce possibilities of further disturbances and loss of life, it would not be possible for Nabha authorities to announce that for some definite period use of Jaitho Gurdwara will be restricted to residents of Nabha State. Intention is to depart from general policy of permitting free access to Gurdwara for bona fide religious purposes as little as recent events render justifiable, subject to above considerations. The views of the Government of the Punjab on this suggestion should please be telegraphed. Addressed Punjab Government, repeated A.G.G., Punjab States, Lahore, for opinion which should be communicated to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department.

154167a

C. 3. POSTS & TELEGRAPHS.

No.

Received here at ____ H. ____ M.

O IB (9/10) AMRITSAR G 23 4 56

PRIVATE SECY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

VICEROYS CAMP

UNPRECEDENTED EXCITEMENT PREVAILS AMONGST SIKHS IN PUNJAB ON JAITO MASSACRE OF DEFENCELESS NONVOILENT AKALIES UNLESS IMMEDIATE STEPS TAKEN TO SOOTHE THE HIGH FEELINGBX BY PUNISHING THE GUILTY SITUATION MAY BECOME MORE SERIOUS (COPY DELD REGR P S VS OFFICE DELHI)

GULABSINGH M L A

Home Dept
Mil
23/2

This form must accompany any inquiry respecting this Telegram.

Lal Chand & Sons.—529—18-5-21—150,000 Bks. (Edn. IV).

168

From the Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab

To the Secretary to the Government of India
Home Department.

155

Dated the 24th February 1924.

Please see your telegram No.D.709 of 23rd February. It is too early yet to tell effect of Jaito on province generally. There is considerable excitement in Amritsar but it is confined to the Golden Temple where Akalis are gathering from outside Districts. Our last information indicates that second Jatha of 500 will leave on 28th instant and arrive Jaito on 14th March by slightly different route. Owing to legal and other objections to arrest or dispersion in British Territory Punjab Government strongly recommend that Jatha should be dealt with at Jaito. This Government do not support that access to Gurdwara by Nabha residents be restricted. Conditions of entry should be such as to make it clear to Sikhs at large that no interference with their religion is contemplated. Any restriction numbers is so regarded. This Government recommends that a small Committee of Sikhs be appointed administrator to regulate admission which should be 50 at a time or such other number as are found feasible. Letter in further detail follows.

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156 +69

From

Lt.Col. A.B.Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,
Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States,

To

The Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Dated Camp Jaiton, the 21st February 1924.

Shahidi Jatha accompanied by about 6,000 other Akalis left Bargari in Faridkot State shortly before noon having been served at Bargari and at Jaiton border with notice regarding admission to Gurdwara, which had been modified in both cases in accordance with your clear the line telegram of yesterday to Administrator.) Akalis screening Jatha advanced on 600 yards front in great depth, armed with lathis, chavis, spears and firearms. Nabha villagers were withdrawn in view of inevitable struggle. Administrator with some 5 officials advanced 100 yards to meet line of Akalis, who were coming on with raised lathis, chavis and spears. Full warning was given by Administrator in person who called on Akalis to halt and explained that failure to comply would necessitate order to fire. Order was utterly disregarded and Administrator and officials had to double back hotly pursued. Administrator reached firing party of 20 selected police and Nabha Infantry who armed with smooth bores and buck-shot were ordered to fire 3 rounds at ring-leaders who were within 6 yards when fire opened. At this stage fire was o p e n e d f r o m A k a l i ranks,

several British officers and State officials having narrow escapes and one villager being wounded. Line of Akalis then swerved to their right, where platoon of Nabha infantry was in position. Administrator gave platoon orders to fire 3 rounds controlled fire with service ammunition. Akalis and Jatha then made for a small outlying Gurdwara called Tibi Sahib to counteract which one squadron cavalry moved over to try and head off Akalis, 10 men being dismounted under Tibi Sahib mound. Akalis increased their fire and delivered determined attack led by a mounted Akali who gave his comrades orders to charge in English. Orders were then issued to the 10 dismounted cavalry to fire a few controlled rounds. This burst of fire finally broke up the Akalis. One and half companies Gurkhas standing by in centre were ordered to retire without firing. Jatha advanced under Tibi Sahib with about 2000 other Akalis who swarmed into Gurdwara. Here Jatha finally halted. Many Akalis soon began to withdraw to North. Cavalry after capturing Akali transport pursued fleeing Akalis and accelerated their flight without inflicting injuries; whilst cavalry were thus engaged, dead and wounded were collected and medical assistance rendered. At this point Kitchloo and Gidwani were arrested at place of encounter in hired motor-car. An American Journalist said to represent New York Times who had accompanied Kitchloo and Gidwani to Nabha border returned to Lahore in hired car after sending written apology for his presence. On return of cavalry, Jatha was separated from remaining Akalis and removed by

villagers and police to prepared enclosures with exception of some 20 men who clung to palanquin on which Granth Sahib was placed. Owing to darkness these were surrounded and will be disposed of tomorrow. After disposal of Jatha remaining Akalis in Tibi Sahib were arrested including 2 notorious women Kishan Kaur and Tej Kaur, former of whom actively incited an ~~xxx~~ attack on cavalry. Total Akali casualties so far ascertained 14 dead and 34 wounded but no member of Shahidi Jatha was injured and special care taken not to interfere with Granth Sahib. Am arriving Delhi tomorrow.

159

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Secret.

Copy of a letter from The Officer Commanding Troops Jaito Secret. No.J/11 Dated 22/2/24. Report on action taken regarding Shahedi Jatha and other Akalis at Jaito on February 21st 1924. Reference Map 44/j/15. 1" to 1 Mile.

In Amplification of my cypher wire No.J.8 of 21st February The following occured:-

From information received by the Civil Authorities, it was anticipated that the Shahedi Jatha 500 strong would reach Jaito on the 21st Feb. moving from the N.E. via the Bargari-Jaito road. It was probable that 200-300 other Akalis would be in attendance. Arrangements were therefore made by the Administrator Nabha to close in the sides of a small stretch of road 800 yards N. of Jaito Village (about the W of Alkwala on map) with barbed wire and thron hedge. The plan was to cut off the procession into parties of 100 approximately, and then to remove them in carts, all due deference being paid to the Granth Sahib, for which special arrangements were made. The above operation was to be carried out by the Villagers, assisted by Police, the troops being kept well in the background.

The initial dispositions of the Troops to fulfil this purpose were:-

1 Squadron Skinners Horse. S of Tibbi Sahib. which is Triangle just W of Alkwala on map.

3 Platoon Akal Infantry behind some mounds S of first L of Alkwala.

2 Coys 1/4th Gurkhas standing to as Reserve in Camp W of Fort (less 1 Platoon in Fort.)

At the Gurdwara, which is just S of the P in Pa. just W of Fort, and which was the main objective of the Shahedi Akalis, were 100 Patiala Infantry and 50 Nabha Infantry.

50 Patiala Infantry were posted at Railway Station.

About 1600 Villagers were assembled in groups with picked leaders and posted on each side of the road about the W of Alkwala whilst more villagers were at the Gurdwara.

The Jatha was expected at 1 to 2 P.M. and troops and

and villagers were in position at /2 Moon. 160 173 10+12

Information coming in from time to time indicated that the Jatha had been largely reinforced, and at 1.45 P.M. the attendant Akalis were estimated to be about 3,000. It then became evident that the plan for using Villagers alone would require to be modified, and these were withdrawn a little more to the S.20 Police and 25 Akal Infantry being lined across the road about the W of Alkwala. The 2 Coys 1/4th Gurkhas (less 1 Platoon in Fort) were moved up to a position just N of Jaito Village.

At 2.45 P.M. the Akalis came into view advancing from the N in a dense mass on a front of about 600 yards, armed with lathis, Chavis, Spears and Firearms, and screening the Shahedi Jatha. The Administrator with some 5 Officials advanced 100 yards to meet the Akalis who were coming on with their Lathis Chavis and Spears raised. The Administrator called on the Akalis to halt and explained that failure to comply would necessitate orders to fire. The Order to halt was utterly disregarded and the Administrator and Officials had to double back hotly pursued.

The Administrator reached the firing party and ordered the Police to open fire with Buckshot at Ringleaders who were 6 yards away.

At this stage some fire was opened from the Akali ranks, bullets passing close to the Administrator and several officials one villager being wounded. The Mass of Akalis then swerved to their right, still advancing. The Administrator gave the Detachment of 25 of the Nabha Infantry orders to fire three rounds controlled fire.

In the meantime I had had the Cavalry brought over to the road to be more centrally placed. On seeing that the mass of the Akalis was heading for the Tibbi Sahib Hill, I personally took the Squadron across to endeavour to check the advancing mob by heading them off with mounted men. I sent Major Lorimer with one troop to the Tibbi Sahib Hill. All my efforts to stop the Akalis were of no avail. I sounded a trumpet and warned them

that

that fire might be opened. They were advancing in a dense mass led by a horseman with drawn sword, who kept on shouting "charge". During this period some fire came from the Akali ranks, The mass of about 3,000 charged up the Hill. Major Lorimer opened with a short burst of controlled fire with 10 men whom he had dismounted. On the Akalis temporarily faltering, fire ceased, but another short burst was necessitated, by a further charge of more Akalis from the right front. This fire finally broke up the Akalis, but the Shahedi Jatha advanced under the Tibbi Sahib, whilst about, 2000 other Akalis swarmed into the Gurdwara on the Hill. Here the Jatha finally halted.

By this time Major Lorimer's troop had joined the Squadron Skinner's Horse S.W. of the Tibbi Sahib. The Detachment 1/4th Gurkhas whom I had moved up to a line about 400 yards N. of the village, were then ordered to withdraw to their original position.

At this time I myself moved to the N of the Tibbi Sahib and noticed large numbers of Akalis withdrawing N. The Akali Transport, about 16 carts, was approaching Tibbi Sahib. Bringing up the Squadron round to the N of the Hill the Transport was seized. I left Major Lorimer in observation S of Tibbi Sahib Hill, with one troop, and I myself took 3 Troops to the N.NE to disperse Akali gatherings in the fields. This was done without violence. I left my staff Officer, Captain Broadfoot Skinner's Horse behind to search the vicinity for any wounded. The Administrator was also at this period moving over the ground with a Medical Officer and several wounded were collected, dressed, and sent to Hospital.

On the return of the Squadron the Shahedi Jatha was separated from the remaining Akalis and removed by Villagers and Police to prepared enclosures. After the disposal of the Jatha, the remaining Akalis were arrested.

The total casualties among the Akalis were 14 Killed and 34 wounded. Care was taken not to fire on the Shahedi Jatha.

The

The situation is now quiet.

I would point out that in my opinion the minimum force was used throughout. Had the Akalis not been checked on the line where action was taken they would have swarmed into Jaito Village and Mundi and probably into the Railway Station, causing much damage to property. Similar action would have been inevitable subsequently round the enclosed area about the Gurudwara, where the difficulties would have been greater, and the casualties also.

Later in the afternoon ~~all~~ all wounded were removed to Hospital and there attended by the State, Military and their own Doctor who had accompanied them. The Civil Authorities Ferozepore were asked to send out as soon as possible an English Surgeon to attend to the most serious cases.

In addition Dr.Kitchlew the Amritsar and Khilaft Agitator, and A.T.Gidwani of Sindh were arrested at the scene of the first encounter.

I am of opinion that the Force I have here at present is quite adequate to control the situation.

Sd.J.A.Muirhead, Lt.Col.,
Commanding Troops, Jaito.

Copies to:-

Chief of the General Staff.
Northern Command.
Lahore District.
Ambala Brigade Area.
Administrator Nabha.

163 176 13

Office of the Officer Commanding Troops JAITO

Copy of letter J.16 Dated 23/2/24. SITUATION REPORT JAITO 23/2/24.

All is quiet.

Captain Warters I.M.S. and two other I.M.S. Officers arrived at JAITO yesterday and the wounded are receiving every attention. Some will be evacuated today to FEROZEPORE.

I omitted to mention in my report J.11. of 22/2/24 that the total number of Akalis was estimated at about 6,000.

As I have heard that a rumour is abroad that the Gurkhas used Machine Guns, I wish to state that the Gurkhas did not come into action at all, and that no automatic weapons at all were used by any of the Force under my command.

Sd/- J.A.MUIRHEAD.Lt.Col.
Commanding Troops at JAITO

COPIES TO:-

Chief of General Staff,
Northern Command,
Lahore District,
Ambala Brigade,
Administrator Nabha.

~~Foreign~~ Home PM 25/1 164 17

413. 24

Telegram ------ R.

From ----- The Political Secy to the Govt. of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To ----- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

No.413-S.

Dated the 23rd February 1924.

Your telegram of yesterday. Government of India agree that in circumstances explained no further offer should be made to jatha. They are strongly of opinion that there should be no wholesale prosecutions and that even if there is evidence against all, only a few, not more than a dozen or so, should be actually prosecuted. You should decide as soon as possible which members of the jatha should be prosecuted and the rest should be removed or allowed to go without delay, except such as may be required as witnesses, in which case it may be convenient that they should remain.

Above instructions will not apply if it can be proved that there was extensive possession of fire-arms by jatha in which case matter should be referred again. Government of India are relying on you to keep A.G.G. and Punjab Government fully informed.

Foreign proceedings No. 25 Pol. 1924 D/ S.

165 178

~~408.~~

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Telegram P., No.408-S., dated the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Telegram has been received from Doctors Partap Singh Chuni Lal and Madan of Amritsar asking for permission to proceed with staff to Jaito for relief of wounded. Government of India think that if these three have decent qualifications and if there is no very obvious objection on personal grounds, it would be advisable to allow them to enter with reasonable staff though the Government of India are advised that medical arrangements at Jaito are adequate.

The Government of India would be glad if Deputy Commissioner Amritsar could be asked to telegraph on these points direct to Administrator at Jaito - if there is anything against the men.

(No distribution).

Kaiie

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~~409~~.16

Telegram R., No.409-S., dated the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Doctors Partap Singh Madan and Chuni Lal who have wired from Amritsar asking for permission to enter Jaito with staff for purpose of medical relief of wounded have been referred to you. Minchin assures us that you have adequate medical arrangements but Government of India consider that it would be advisable to allow these three to enter with reasonable staff if they have decent qualifications and if there is no very obvious objection on personal grounds. They should be warned on arrival that they will be expected to confine themselves to medical work. If you find afterwards that they are not observing this condition you can send them away. Government of India have wired asking Deputy Commissioner Amritsar to let you know direct if there is anything against the men.

(No distribution).

Home

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302. 17

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Further enquiry shows that of Shahidi Jathas 455 have been arrested 4 have been killed 12 wounded. Previous telegram inaccurate because further enquiry showed that portion of Jatha mingled with mob. No firing at Jatha took place.

(No distribution).

168 181

Telegram R., No. nil, dated and recd. the 25th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Statement in Press that Akalis commenced the firing on February 21st is doubtful. First Akali fire noticed after first State party had fired with Buck Shot and before orders to fire with ball had issued to second State firing party.

(P.S.V., G.S.B., & Home Dept.).

169 182 419.

Telegram R., No. nil, dated and recd. the 25th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram of the 23rd February. Investigations proceeding but will take some time in view of the fact that most witnesses have to come from Ferozepore and other Districts and also that as ~~as~~ usual members of the Jatta conceal identity. Evidence has been received from several persons including one member of Shahidi Jatta as to the use of fire-arms and also as to summoning of Akalis with fire-arms to Bargari by Jathedar of Shahidi Jatta. Other members of the Shahidi Jatta are ready to make statements. It is certain that fire-arms were made use of and this can be proved. In view of these facts and also that the Punjab Government's information is that another Jatta will leave Amritsar on February 28th I would suggest making it necessary that members of the Shahidi Jatta should remain in custody; they will certainly be used as propaganda agents to raise further recruits for second Jatta.

If it is true that second Jatta is about to march I would suggest declaration of Martial Law in Amritsar. Investigation of present case is a very heavy piece of work and must take some time.

(P.S.V., G.S.B., & Home Dept.)

170 — 183

~~396.~~

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 23rd February 1924. 20

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated to Punjab).

CLEAR THE LINE.

All quiet. No further Jatha. Seriously injured evacuated to Ferozepore. Amritsar doctors arrived accepted conditions laid down and are employed.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

T71 184 3

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 24th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated to Punjab Government and Punjab States).

Doctors Madan, Chiman Lal and Partab Singh left Jaito for Amritsar this morning after sending me a letter thanking us for kindness and courtesy shown to them and stating that they had satisfied themselves that everything necessary in the way of attendance on and treatment of wounded had been and was being done.

Copy of their letter and my reply follow by post. All cases save (grp. undec. ? those) cases whom doctors certified could be returned to jail were (grp. undec. ? sent) to Ferozepore in charge of two doctors. Situation quiet.

(P.S.V., G.S.B., & Home Dept.)

172 185 ~~393.~~ 22

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Your telegram of the 22nd February. Viewed in the light of recent information that Jatta carried fire-arms concealed in transport and assured Akalis that they would supply them with same in case of necessity consider that it is imperative that enquiry with ~~xx~~ the view of possible criminal proceedings should be instituted against entire Jatta and no further offer made them.

(No distribution).

173 186 23

405.

Telegram R., No.405-S., dated the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Government of India consider it essential that full enquiry should be held at once by Magistrate and have arranged with Punjab Government for immediate deputation special Officer. Reference your telegram of to-day Government of India would like to know whether you contemplate criminal proceedings against any members of Jatha. Their reason for asking is that they have been considering whether Jatha might not be informed that the offer to them in regard to the Akhand Path is still open on conditions already made known to them. But such an offer would obviously be tantamount to condonation of any offences committed by members of the Jatha in connection with recent events. Government of India would be glad to have your views.

(No distribution).

174

187 388.

Telegram R., No.nil, dated and recd. the 22nd February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha, Camp Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

In view of altered situation should Shahidijathas be sent to Bawall or should I keep them as prisoners.

(No distribution).

175 188 424.

Telegram R., No.nil, dated and recd. the 25th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.
(Repeated to Punjab and Punjab States).

Situation quiet.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

176 189

Telegram No.15423/M.O.1. dated 25th February 1924.
From - Chief Genstaff, Delhi.
To - - Commanding Troops, Jaito (Nabha State).

CLEAR LINE.

Presume all troops including State Force Troops employed at Jaito were under your command and that no troops either regular or State employed automatic weapons vide your report No.J.16 of 23rd February. Reply clear line.

Telegram No.J.18, dated 25th February 1924.
From - Commanding Troops, Jaito (Nabha State).
To - - Chief Genstaff, Delhi.

CLEAR LINE.

Your 15423/M.O.1. All troops including State Forces under my command. Actual order to fire to Police and State Platoon given by Administrator personally. No troops either Regular or State employed automatic weapons.

Copy to :-

P.S.V.
Sir Malcolm Hailey.
Secretary, (A.D.)
A.G's Branch.
M.O.-3.
Home Dept. (Mr.J.Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

177 with Flag 190

_____ DEPARTMENT. File No.

_____ BRANCH. Serial No.

Draft Letter / Memorandum / Telegram

Heading:

Case or Diary No. _____

If post copy of telegram required _____

Date of despatch of above _____

List of enclosures _____

Class for Telegrams ORDINARY. / EXPRESS.

No. D-724 Dated 25 Feby 1924.

To

Punjab, Lahore.

(Code word for telegrams.)

Highly objectionable and mendacious pamphlet respecting recent happenings at Jaito been printed, as special addition of Onward by S.Harnam Singh at the Onkar Press for Pandit Durga Das Vaid, Publisher. Copies been distributed to Members of Legislative Assembly Government of Punjab will doubtless be on the watch for dissemination of this locally.

S. 5.

178 191 425.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 25th February 1926.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Your telegram No.424-S. Allegations in leaflet utterly false. (1) Regarding whipping of women. No one, male or female, was whipped or lashed. Two women Kishan Kaur and Tej Kaur were arrested on my orders, five others had to be taken into custody as they refused to leave male Akalis in spite of repeated efforts to persuade them to do so. Two of these subsequently asked to be allowed to go and were permitted to do so. (2) Regarding machine guns. There were no machine guns. Cavalry had Hotchkiss which were never taken off the horses. Gurkhas had Lewis guns which never had their magazines placed on them. (3) Regarding firing from Fort. Fort is some 400 yards from scene and no troops were posted there save one platoon of Gurkhas as guards. No firing from Fort took place. (4) No machine gun, Lewis gun or Hotchkiss gun was fired. (5) Regarding medical aid. So far from hindering attendance the doctor with Jatha was asked if he had full medical appliances and on his reply that they had not as they were told to expect beating not firing, these were supplied from our military stores. No man attending the wounded was cudgeled.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

179 192 424

Telegram R., No.424-S., dated the 25th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Leaflet entitled "Jaito Massacre" has been issued to every Member of Legislative Assembly by the Editor of "Onward" which contains the following allegations:-

(1) that women were brutally whipped and were carried to the Fort and lashed for the fault of attending the wounded

(2) that machine guns stood ready for a signal from you

(3) that from the Fort came a booming sound of the shot one and then another

(4) that machine guns showered volleys indiscriminately on the crowd

(5) that whoever tried to administer the medical aid in the indigenous ways met with merciless manhandling.

Please telegraph immediately the facts regarding these five allegations.

(P.S.V., G.S.R. & Home Dept.)

1800 193

426.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 25th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

It has been ascertained that Gurkhas fired 35 rounds on 21st. Written report follows.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

1881 194 ~~431.~~ 34

Telegram R., No.431-S., dated the 26th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Please report when magisterial enquiry is likely to be complete. Please also report total number of rounds fired by Police and Troops on the 21st.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

C. 182 185

POSTS TELEGRAPHS. 195

NOTICE.

This form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this Telegram.

Charges to pay.

Rs.	As.

Office Stamp: DELHI 26 FEB 24 G.L.O.

Handed in at (Office of Origin)	Date.	Hour.	Minute.	Service Instructions.	Words.
Khore Gaul	Feb 24				56

Recd. here at H. M. 15 50

To Home Delhi

Corp 27

8703 SB. Your letter D 124 Roll of Assembly for last session orders moving under 124 B Penal Code Sagram Singh Of Panch Started to

N.B.—The name of the Sender, if telegraphed, is written after the text.

Lal Chand & Sons—3617—27-2-22—200,000 Bks.

183

POSTS TELEGRAPHS. 196

NOTICE. This form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this Telegram.	Charges to pay. Rs.	As.	Office Stamp.

Handed in at (Office of Origin)	Date.	Hour.	Minute.	Service Instructions.	Words.

Recd. here at H. M.

To

In connection with anoth
of his productions and
prescription of the fruits
referred to by you in he
done now stop. If had alread
come to notice here = Punjab

N.B.—The name of the Sender, if telegraphed, is written after the text.

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P&A 27/2 184 197 331. 329

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 26th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Magistrate will complete record of evidence tomorrow and hopes to submit report on February 29th or March 1st. Presume report should be sent to you. Return of rounds fired on 21st was buck shot 48 ball 226 of which 125 were by British and 101 by State forces. It is almost certain that all these rounds were not actually fired as several have been found on site of action and further search is being made. Buck shot was fired by mixed force of police and State infantry.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

185 198

440.

Telegram R., No.440-S., dated the 26th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States, Lahore.

(Repeated Administrator of Nabha, Jaito).

Following telegram No.256-Pol. 26th has been sent by Home Department to Punjab Government. Begins. Please refer to your secret demi-official letter of 24th. Government of India accept conclusion of Punjab Government that second jatha should be allowed to proceed to Jaiton. They are impressed by possible serious effect on moral of districts through which the jatha may march but recognise that in present circumstances legal and practical difficulties in way of dispersing jatha in British territory would be considerable.

As regards restriction which was under consideration on use of Gangar Gurdwara to residents of Nabha they do not propose to press this though later developments may necessitate this or similar measure. They are entirely in accord with view that every effort must be made to avoid offence to bona fide religious sentiment but consider that it would be undue strain on this view to apply it to give license to projects of palpably political and seditious character. Conditions already announced provide in their opinion all reasonable facilities for genuine religious observances and they are unwilling, as a consequence of recent events, to take action which would be construed as retreat from position which was carefully considered and has been publicly announced. They are of opinion therefore that second jatha should be treated as far as possible in

all

all respects in same manner as first. Government of India do not propose unless and until jatha is actually in course of formation, to issue announcement of conditions in press pending result of advice reported to have been given by Gandhi to Akali leaders. Please keep us promptly supplied with all information available as to formation of jatha.

Punjab Government are doubtless giving attention to activities of Omkar Press, from which large quantities of propagandist matter of highly objectionable character have been received here. Ends.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

187

436.

Telegram P., No.436-S., dated the 26th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States, Lahore.

Pending receipt of Magistrate's report decision will be deferred as to number of persons to be prosecuted.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Telegram R., No.256-Pol., dated the 26th February 1924.

From- The Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department, Delhi,

To - The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Please refer to your secret demi-official letter of 24th. Government of India accept conclusion of Punjab Government that second jatha should be allowed to proceed to Jaiton. They are impressed by possible serious effect on moral of districts through which the jatha may march but recognise that in present circumstances legal and practical difficulties in way of dispersing jatha in British territory would be considerable.

As regards restriction which was under consideration on use of Gangar Gurdwara to residents of Nabha they do not propose to press this though later developments may necessitate this or similar measure. They are entirely in accord with view that every effort must be made to avoid offence to bona fide religious sentiment but consider that it would be undue strain on this view to apply it to give license to projects of palpably political and seditious character. Conditions already announced provide in their opinion all reasonable facilities for genuine religious observances and they are unwilling, as a consequence of recent events, to take action which would be construed as retreat from position which was carefully considered and has been publicly announced. They are of opinion therefore that second jatha should be treated as far as possible in all respects in same manner as first. Government of India do not propose unless and until jatha is actually in course of formation, to issue announcement of conditions in press pending result of advice reported to

have

have been given by Gandhi to Akali leaders. Please keep us promptly supplied with all information available as to formation of jatha.

Punjab Government are doubtless giving attention to activities of Omkar Press, from which large quantities of propagandist matter of highly objectionable character have been received here.

190 203 x1

Confidential.

D.O.No.312 - R.
N-30/24.

Dated Lahore, the 26th February 1924.

My dear Thompson,

In continuation of my confidential demi-official letter No.1X-R/N-4/22, dated the 24th February regarding the Sikh situation in the Panjab, I enclose for information a copy of Wilson Johnston's demi-official letter No.Camp/08 dated the 25th February, in which he states his opinion regarding the various proposals discussed in my letter. I also enclose a copy of a letter, dated the 23rd February, from His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, regarding the general situation.

It will be seen that Wilson Johnston is of opinion that the next Jatha should be disposed of in British India, but having regard to the points discussed in Craik's secret letter of the 24th Februgry to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department, it appears to me that on the whole it would be better to allow the jatha to proceed unmolested to Jaiton. In all other respects, Wilson Johnston concurs in the suggestions I have already put forward save that he is not in favour of the employment of any more troops from Patiala. Should the Government of India consider that a small force of Jind Infantry should be sent to Jaiton, as suggested by Wilson Johnston, I have no doubt that the Jind Darbar will readily agree. You will notice that an Akhand Path was started by the villagers on the morning of the 22nd February, the ardas taking the form of thanksgiving for the delivery of the village from the hands of the Akalis, who attacked it on the 21st instant. The military report regarding the operations of the 21st February is being sent to you to-day, and the magisterial enquiry, which is being conducted by Sardar Balwant Singh,

the

the Magistrate, whose services have been lent for the purpose by the Panjab Government, will probably take another week to complete.

The letter from the Maharaja of Patiala shows that His Highness is strongly in favour of the next jatha being stopped in British India. Both he and Wilson Johnston lay stress on the bad effect that the march of such a jatha through British India is bound to excite. The statement of Wilson Johnston that the members of the Shahedi Jatha actually preached sedition and distributed prohibitive pamphlets, conflicts with the remark contained in Craik's secret letter of the 24th February that no political speeches were made and that the daily diwans were confined to hymns and prayers. If the next jatha that is expected to leave Amritsar on the 28th instant behaves in any actively seditious manner, it would, I think, be expedient to arrest its progress at once, unless the Government of India consider that points (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) in Craik's letter outweigh the advantages of stopping the spectacular march of the next jatha, whose lengthy progress has evidently been arranged with a view to propaganda purposes.

The itinerary of this jatha is as follows:-

Date	Station
28th February 1924	Bahoru
29th "	Jhabbal
1st March 1924	Narsinghwala
2nd March "	Makhi Khurd
3rd "	Chima
4th "	Nabipur (Amritsar)
5th "	Makhu (Ferozepur)
6th "	Kot Esekhan
7th "	Khosa Kotla
8th and 9th "	Mogha
10th March 1924	Singan Wala
11th "	Bagha Purana

192 205

12th March 1924 Motla.
13th " Bambia Bhaika (Ferozepur)
14th " Jaitu

I shall be obliged if you will let me know at a very early date the decision of the Government of India as to whether the next jatha is to be allowed to march to Jaito, as, if so, immediate steps will have to be taken to evacuate the prisoners now in custody at that place, and Ogilvie will have to be informed that his leave must be postponed for the present. I shall also be glad to receive orders as to whether the Government of India agree that the members of the Shahedi Jatha and the Akalis, now in custody at Jaito, should be prosecuted. In view of the evidence, to which Wilson Johnston now alludes, as to the use of fire arms and to the utilisation of the Darli Jatha as an attacking party to secure the entry of the Shahidi Jatha into the Gangsar Gurdwara, it appears essential that all members of the Shahedi Jatha and of the Darli Jatha should be prosecuted and awarded heavy sentences.

Yours sincerely,
Sd.A.B.Minchin.

To

The Hon'ble Mr.J.P.Thompson, C.S.I.,
Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department,
Delhi.

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193 206

D.O.No.Camp/08.

Office of the Administrator,
Nabha State,
Camp Jaitu.
~~Feb.~~ 25, 1924.

My dear Minchin,

I received your confidential d. o. No. 2X.R/N.4-22 of the 24th late last night. You ask firstly for my views upon proposals discussed in your letter to Thompson. I take those proposals seriatim.

We are ready as we have always been to handle any Shahedi Jatha of 500 Akalis and to handle them without having recourse to fire arms. What we cannot control is a mob of the nature that covered the approach of the Jatha on the 21st instant. Personally I cannot understand the difficulty of the Punjab Government as to the legal point of view of any interferance with the Jatha, as according to my information the members have been actually preaching sedition, distributing prohibited pamphlets and conspiring with other Akalis to appear at the final halting place before Jaito and render active assistance with fire arms. We have evidence to the effect that these incidents actually occurred in the progress of the recent Jatha and that evidence is from members of the Shahedi Jatha itself. My own feeling is that the centre of all the trouble is Amritsar [redacted]

already imposed should be placed. This has been our policy throughout.

3. With the views of Sirdar Sunder Singh I entirely disagree. I talked matters over at very considerable length with the Maharajah of Patiala, and he agreed that the restrictions imposed were not contrary to Sikh religious observancies. It is my opinion that his views are entitled to greater respect than those of Sirdar Sunder Singh. As to the latter's statement that a Sikh would never allow himself to starve to death, that is beyond the point. You will remember that at a previous occasion in September when the Jatha who were in possession of the Gurdwara was cordoned, other Jathas from outside (if I am not wrong one was the Durli Jatha) broke the cordon line and took provisions into the Gurdwara. I am certain that if any attempt was made to starve a Jatha who were in possession of the Gurdwara similar attemps to relieve the Jatha would be made, and this would undoubtedly lead to further blood shed. As to the Sirdar's suggestion with regard to a committee of Sikh Sirdars, I am not clear as to his intention. If the intention is that this committee should be of Sikh Sirdars of Nabha State or even all the Phulkian States I have no objection. I have throughout dealt with these jathas through the Sikh Sirdars of the State, some of whom are of course officials as well. If however his intention is that Sikh Sirdars of the Punjab should be appointed as a committee, I must most emphatically protest. The Sikh Sirdars of the Punjab have

proved

proved quite unable to cope with the situation in the Punjab and I must ask that they shall not be allowed to associate themselves with the arrangements in Jaitu. At the same time I am convinced that no committee will be of the least assistance, the Akalis are not prepared to listen to reason. You yourself must be convinced of that. All our attempts to parley with them have been in vain. If another Jatha comes I am convinced that we will have to deal with them in the way that we had already arranged to deal with the previous Jatha had it come unaccompanied.

4. I am in entire agreement with the views expressed by Langley, Puckle and Emerson. It is imperative that nothing should be allowed to occur at Jaitu which can be construed as a victory of the Akalis over Government. Anything of this nature would make the already difficult position intolerable, and it would be unfair not only to the State administration, but to the inhabitants of the State, who have practically to a man, declared themselves against the Parbhandak Committee and its emmissaries, these jathas.

5. As I have already said, if the second Jatha is accompanied by a mob of unruly Akalis I am satisfied that I will be able to deal with the situation, but it will be necessary before the arrival of the second jatha to evacuate the prisoners who are already here. I am now more strongly of opinion than ever that it would be a very serious mistake to release any members of this Shahedi Jatha. We have evidence indisputable from members of the Jatha themselves as to the use of fire arms and to the effect that the chief Jathadar of the Shahedi Jatha summoned the Durli Jatha to Bargari and during the advance from Bargari on Jaitu called upon the Durli Jathadar to do his work as agreed on, whereupon the Durli Jatha led by the Jathadar with a double barrel gun formed the advance party in front of the mob as you saw. Under these circumstances my strong opinion is that it is most necessary to prosecute all members of the Jatha and to press for heavy sentences. If then a second jatha is to be allowed to arrive

at

at Jaitu, arrangements must be made for the removal of our prisoners to some other spot. I can quite see that that spot should be Nabha and if it is decided to send the prisoners there it will be necessary to construct barbed wire cages in which to keep them, there being no accommodation for so large a number in Nabha. I must point out however that the whole of my available Police and the whole of the State Forces are at Jaitu and will be necessary there. Provision will have to be made for suitable guards for the supervision of the prisoners in such cages. There is also the possibility which must be considered that if these prisoners are removed to Nabha, Nabha itself may become the point of a second morcha, in which case I shall have to ask for an increase in our military garrison, and also for a responsible European official who will be able to look after affairs there.

6. If it is decided to prosecute the Shahedi Jatha, as I have stated in my opinion it is, we will need magistrates. This will have to await the decision of the major point. At the present time I am using Sirdar Balwant Singh to record as a magistrate the statements of the accused who are willing to make such, as I am of opinion that it is advisable that such statements should be recorded by a magistrate who is not a State employee. I am therefore asking that the services of Sirdar Balwant Singh should be lent to the State on the conclusion of his magisterial enquiry which he is holding for this purpose.

7. I do not anticipate the danger that you mention of jatha's proceeding on their own initiative to Jaitu. I am convinced that the jathas who participated in the attack on the 21st will not return to Jaitu. They have had their lesson. These jathas as far as my information goes were drawn chiefly from the Zira and Moga Tehsil of the Ferozepur District and from Jagraon Tehsil of the Ludhiana District. These are the parts of British India which lies nearest to the State territory. If any jathas from other

parts

parts of the Punjab intend to come to Jaitu it is my belief that they will congregate either at Amritsar or at Muktsar and will proceed to Jaitu from one of these places.

8. I am not prepared at present to ask for further troops. As you know the number that came into action on the 21st was a very small portion of those at our disposal. I am not in favour of asking for any more of the Patiala Troops. These as you know were asked for to show that the Patiala State was at one with the Nabha State over this question. It might be politically advantageous to have a small detachment of the Jind Troops to show that the Phulkian States are one in the matter. As the situation develops I will be in a better position to state the possible requirements in the way of an increased garrison. It must be fully realised that if another unrully mob such as appeared on the 21st again advances on Jaitu and is to be stopped it will be necessary once more to use fire arms, but this will have to be dealt with as a purely military operation as they will come with definite hostile intention. As you yourself realised enormous forces would be necessary to have contained the mob that appeared on the 21st. My present opinion is that the troops that I have here are ample to break up any similar gathering in the same way as we broke up the mob on the 21st.

This only gives my views on the proposals discussed in your letter to Thompson. I will let you know later when orders have been received as to the prosecution of the jatha as to the number of magistrates that will be required and also as to the place at which they should report.

An Akhand Path was started by the villagers on the morning of the 22nd and should have concluded by now. Their ardas was to take the form of a thanks giving for the delivery of the village and of the vicinity from the hands of the excited mob of Akalis who attacked Jaitu on the

21st.

21st. If it is decided to allow the Shahedi Jatha to come to Jaitu and it is also decided that this first jatha should be prosecuted and should be confined in pens in Nabha then it will be necessary to have an English official who is thoroughly 'au fait' with the situation and with local conditions and in that case I think that much as I dislike the idea of Ogilvie's leave being interfered with, it will be advisable to retain his services as you suggest. I am most emphatically of opinion that no such Jatha should now be allowed to approach Jaitu, but if my opinion is over-ruled then I think that as you propose Ogilvie should be asked to postpone his departure on leave.

I am glad to hear that restrictions have been placed upon the visitors to the Akali leaders.

Sirdar Balwant Singh has been conducting his magisterial enquiry for the last two days and is proceeding with the enquiry as speedily as possible. I gather that it will take him some 6 or 8 days to complete. I have already despatched to you the Military Report as to the occurrence on 21st.

I fancy that now I have answered all your enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. J.Wilson Johnston.

Lieutenant-Colonel A.B.Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,

Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,

Lahore.

199

Copy of a letter dated the 23rd February 1924, from His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, to the Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States.

I have received Mr. Wilson Johnston's letter of the 22nd instant from Camp Jaito which he has addressed me at your instance enclosing a copy of your account to the Government of India of the incident on the 21st. I very much regret that the mob which accompanied the Jatha, attacked the Nabha position and opened fire on them, and forced them to open fire in return to defend the situation. Casualties were inevitable. The patience and restriant with which the Nabha Administrator and the authorities met the situation is commendable. Presence of persons like Gidwani and Dr. Kitchloo with the Jatha make it more than clear, and no one with any grain of sense in his head can doubt that the whole mission of the Akalis was a political one and they were only taking shelter under the veil of a religious mission to gain the sympathy of illiterate masses. The note which appeared in the Pioneer of February 22nd (page 9) under the heading Akali activities at Jaito, has a significance in this connection. Evidently while the Prabandhak Committee was outwardly preaching non-violence, the escort of over 6,000 of other Akalis and Sikhs accompanying the Jatha with lathies, chhavis and fire-arms was being incited to commit violence with the couplet of the Sikh holy scriptures referred to in the note. They had evidently come prepared to punish any one who stood in their way or interfered with their plans.

It is a most regrettable incident and while I am surprised that there were not larger casualties, I seriously think that it is high time that the Government of India should finally decide on a definite line of action xxxx regarding the nefarious propaganda which the Akalis are

carrying

carrying on at present in the Panjab without check or control. I also think that this incident makes it all the more necessary that the Punjab States should adopt a uniform policy in dealing with the Akali question and that some definite line of action should be adopted by them to work simultaneously and in complete harmony and co-operation with the policy and action of the Panjab Government. It is with this conjoint effort and firmness of attitude that we may hope to relieve the Province of this standing and ever-growing menace to law and peace of the country.

I understand that among the casualties there are some non-Akalis also. This proves clearly the effect which the public preaching had on the general public at every stage of the progress of the Jatha. The number of the jatha which started from Amritsar was said to be 500 and by the time it reached Jaito, the supporters and sympathisers of the Jatha numbered over 6,000 who, as the incident shows, were mad on violence. The Akalis have thus found a very helpful means of spreading their revolutionary propaganda. It is therefore extremely important for the Government of India to decide how such Jathas shall be dealt with in the future. In my opinion that ought to be nipped in the bud, otherwise if they are allowed to march through the province to a foreign jurisdiction in the manner they have done this time, it will inevitably mean ~~xxxxxx~~ exciting the feelings of the general public and creating violent hatred against British Government and authority which in one word may mean giving rise to open rebellion in the country.

I am glad you have taken the earliest opportunity of personally laying the situation before the Government of India and I hope some definite conclusions will be arrived at and strong action advised.. Raja Sir Daya Kishan is going to Delhi tomorrow and I have asked him

to

to take his chance of finding you there. If he finds you there he will communicate to you my views in the matter in greater detail which you are welcome to lay before His Excellency.

I shall be anxious to know what decision the Government of India arrive at.

No. 311-R.
N-30/22

202

From

Lt. Colonel A.B. Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,
Agent to the Governor General,
Punjab States,

To

The Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Dated Lahore, the 26th February 1924.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward for the information of the Government of India a copy of the report on the action taken by the military authorities at Jaito on the 21st February 1924, by the Officer Commanding the Troops, which has been forwarded to me by the Administrator of Nabha without comment.

2. In order to assist Mr. J. Wilson Johnston, the Administrator of the Nabha State, I proceeded from Lahore to Faridkot on the 19th instant, and having satisfied myself that the Council of Administration had made adequate arrangements to co-operate with the Nabha authorities, I went to Jaito on the 20th idem. I was present with the firing line when the Akalis, who acted as a screen to the Shahidi Jatha, made their attack at about 2. 45 p.m. on the 21st February 1924. It was only when the Akalis were sighted that it became evident an assault on an extended front had to be met, and the Administrator's arrangements had to be altered at the last minute. A small firing party, which was armed with smooth-bore guns and buck-shot, was quickly placed in position opposite the centre of the advancing horde, and a platoon of about 30 men of the Nabha Infantry were moved up on their left. These men by mistake aligned themselves

along

along a road in such a way that they would have been taken in flank by the Akalis, and as at the moment the military officers were otherwise occupied, I ran across to place them in proper position. On returning to the smooth-bore firing party, I saw the Administrator accompanied by some Nabha officials advancing towards the on-coming Akalis. He was supported by some of the British officers on their chargers, who had evidently moved out to support him in case he was cut off before he could return to the line. I could not hear what Mr. Wilson Johnston was shouting owing to the roar of voices and the reports of patakas (squibs) which were freely used by the Akalis as they advanced, but his efforts to check the Akalis were obviously useless, so he and those with him quickly doubled back to the line and fire was opened with buck shot. One of the Akali leaders fell within 6 ft. of the line of troops and there were other casualties at a greater distance. The on-rush in front of the firing party was now checked, and orders were hastily given to close a road on the left of the original firing party with iron chains that had previously been provided for the purpose. During this process a villager, who was placing the chains in position, was wounded by a bullet from the Akali ranks.

3. The Akalis, on being checked, swerved to their right and advanced on the platoon of Nabha Infantry, which was also ordered to fire. This caused the main body again to swerve to their right, and passing beyond the left flank of the platoon they rapidly advanced on the Tibbi Sahib Gurdwara. This was the first time I was to able to see the Shahidi Jatha, which had hitherto been screened by the mass of Akalis. The Administrator and I ran along parallel to the Jatha in order to make sure that a small body of Gurkhas, which was firing in the direction of the Akalis, should not shoot at the Jatha. Just before we reached the Gurkhas their fire was stopped and the men concerned retired. Whilst advancing

advancing towards the Gurkhas several bullets whistled by us from the direction of the Akalis. Meanwhile, the Cavalry had been endeavouring to prevent the Akalis from reaching the Tibbi ~~Sahib~~ hill, but without avail, and the jatha finally came to a halt immediately beneath the mound on which the Tibbi Sahib Gurdwara stands, whilst the Akalis swarmed over the Gurdwara and the mound. Leaving one troops of cavalry to contain the Jatha, Colonel Muirhead then proceeded with the remainder of the cavalry to disperse the groups of Akalis, who were dotted over the fields along the line of their advance. Mr. Wilson Johnston also went off with the cavalry in order to collect the dead and wounded in front of the two positions, where fire was first opened.

4. On the return of the cavalry, the Gurkhas were moved up as a measure of precaution, whilst a troop of cavalry was sent in to cut off the Shahidi Jatha from the Akalis, who were still occupying the Tibbi Sahib mound. At the same time a large number of villagers were brought up, who with the sepoys of the Nabha Infantry, then proceeded to remove the members of the Shahidi Jatha to pens, which had been specially prepared to receive them, in the vicinity of the village of Jaito. This operation took a long time, as most of the members of the Jatha had to be carried to the pens in carts. The villagers appeared to be much incensed against the invaders and were not inclined to handle them gently, but wherever rough treatment was noticed it was at once checked. After the jatha had been disposed of, the palanquin on which the Granth Sahib reposed, together with about 20 men, ~~who were~~ clinging to it, were left in position, as they refused to take the holy book to the Dharamsala. Later on, after darkness had fallen, I was informed that the men accompanying the Granth Sahib had agreed to take the palanquin to the Dharamsala, where the Granth Sahib was deposited with due respect. Meanwhile the Sikh villagers were sent up to remove the few Akalis

Who

who still remained in the Tibbi Sahib Gurdwara, and about 170 men and 5 women were taken into custody. The latter included the notorious fire-brand Musammat Kishan Kaur, who had been heard by the troopers, who were deputed to separate the jatha from the Akalis, inciting the latter to attack the cavalry. The women also included Musammat Tej Kaur, the wife of a notorious Akali of Faridkot State, who was recently awarded a long term of imprisonment for inciting the Faridkot troops to mutiny. Amongst the Akalis brought down from the Tibbi Sahib many were found to be armed with huge clubs, spears, takvas (battle axes) and chavis. No fire-arms were found, but these were probably removed or concealed by the ~~xxxxxx~~ crowd of Akalis, who were dispersed by the cavalry. Prompt arrangements were made to succour the wounded and to remove the dead, as soon as the cavalry had cleared the ground. A number of dead and wounded were found in the Tibbi Sahib in charge of a medical staff, which had accompanied the Jatha. It was computed at the time that out of the Akalis 14 had been killed and 34 wounded. It is possible, however, that some dead and wounded may have been taken away by the villagers.

5. Mr. Wilson Johnston acted throughout with great coolness and presence of mind. He refrained from opening fire until this was absolutely necessary, and took every precaution to ensure that the minimum amount of injury should be inflicted, which was necessary to check the on-rush of the Akalis. The troops were also well handled and well under control.

I have, etc.,

Sd. A.B., Minchin,

Agent to the Governor General.

206 219 57 49

485.

Telegram P., No.435-S., dated the 26th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore.

Clear the Line

Message from Ryan is being returned to you. It may be passed.

This refers to your letter dated 25th No.4 X R.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

207 220 58

Home DEPARTMENT. File No.

Political BRANCH. Serial No.

Draft Letter / Memorandum / Telegram

Heading:

Case or Diary No.

Post copy of telegram required

Date of despatch of above

List of enclosures

Class for Telegrams ~~EXPRESS~~ EXPRESS.

No. 5257 Dated 27th Feby 19

Telegram. (Express)

To

The Chief Secretary to the Govt. of the Punjab.

(Code word for telegrams.)

Continuation my telegram No. 256 of 26th. Please telegraph in particular as soon as definitely known actual numbers of second Jatha. If numbers are in marked excess of previous Jatha this may have important bearing on terms of admission to Gurdwara.

208 221 59

Telegram.P.

From..The C.S.to the Government of the Punjab.

To...The Sy.to the G.of I.,Home Dept.

No. 6166.,dated the 27th Febry.1924.

Please see your telegram no.257,dated the 27th. Latest information is strength of Jatha starting on the 28th instant will be 500.Rumour that third Jatha will start on March 1st not confirmed.

.....o.....o.....

209

445.

Telegram R., No.445-S., dated the 27th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Your letter dated 25th February-Camp 08, to Minchin. Please telegraph whether ardas of Akhand Path which started on 22nd did take form of thanks giving for delivery of village from Akalis.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

210 223 446

Telegram ------ R. 447.

From ---- The Political Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To ------ The Administrator,
NABHA. (Jaito.)
(Repeated to Punstates.)

No.447-S.

Dated 27th February, 1924.

Government of India would be glad to know what action is being taken with regard to Kitchloo and Gidwani. Under what section is it proposed to prosecute ? It is important that no action should be taken except on complete evidence.

G.S.B

(P.S.V., ~~E.S.V.~~ and Home.)

211

224 626

448.

Telegram R., No.448-S., dated the 27th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore.

Your letter 312-R. dated 26th February. No objection to small force of Jind Infantry being sent Jaito if Darbar agree. Government of India think it desirable that Ogilvie should postpone leave for the present till situation is quieter.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

212

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 27th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.445-S. Yes and with additional prayers that the Guru would prevent any further Shahidi Jatta.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

213 276 6447

Telegram R., dated and rcvd. the 27th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.447-S. Complaint is under preparation under sections 121 over 109 123 over 109 307 148 read with 149 Indian Penal Code. Complaint is being prepared under advice of competent pleader(s) after careful scrutiny of available evidence.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

214

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 27th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegrams Nos. 401 and 403-S. Number of dead and wounded picked up on 21st 14 and 34 respectively. Subsequently five of the wounded died giving deaths 19 wounded 29. Two days later an Akali admitted to hospital with fever proves to have slight wound. Including this man casualties are thus 19 deaths 30 wounded. It is certain that some slightly wounded departed. Several such rumoured from Ferozepore and Faridkot. No further deaths reported. It must be remembered that number of rounds returned as used are those un-accounted for and it is certain that some at any rate were lost comparison with 1919 at Amritsar is unfair that was case of enclosed space and stationary crowd at Jaito was open space and swiftly moving mob. I would refer you to S.G.P.C's own communique published in Civil and Military Gazette of February 26th wherein they estimate deaths 18 wounded 60. Their estimate is not likely to be on the side of moderation.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

215 226 436

Telegram----R.

From the Administrator, Nabha State, Jaito.
To the Political Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign and Political Department.
Dated (and received) the 27th February 1924.

Your telegram No.447-S. Complaint is under preparation under sections ~~121~~ over 109, 125 over ~~307~~ 109, 307 148 read with 149 Indian Penal Code. Complaint is being prepared under advice of competent pleader(s) after careful scrutiny of available evidence.

Gajjan Singh
Kutchlow
Fidwan

216 279 67

434.

Telegram — R.

From

The Administrator, Nabha State, Jaiton.

To

The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department.

Dated (and received) 27th.Feb.'24

Your telegrams Nos. 401 and 403-S. Number of dead and wounded picked up on 21st., 14 and 34 respectively. Subsequently five of the wounded died giving deaths 19, wounded 29. Two days later an Akali admitted to hospital with fever proves to have slight wound. Including this man casualties are thus 19 deaths and 30 wounded. It is certain that some slightly wounded departed. Several such rumoured from Ferozepore and Faridkot. No further deaths reported. It must be remembered that number of rounds returned as used are those un-accounted for and it is certain that some at any rate were lost. Comparision with 1919 at Amritsar is unfair. That was case of en enclosed space and stationary crowd. At Jaito was open space and swiftly moving mob. I would refer you to S.G.P.C's own communique published in Civil & Military Gazette of February 26th. wherein they estimate deaths 18, wounded 60. Their estimate is not likely to be on the side of moderation.

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217 230 68

441.

36

Telegram R., No.441-S., dated the 27th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Your telegram 26th.

Are not reported casualties rather low having regard to expenditure of ammunition reported ? At Amritsar in April 1919, ratio was one death casualty for every 4 or 5 rounds. At Jaito ratio is 1 death to every 20 rounds. Understand General Staff are also making enquiries.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

218 69 39

Telegram R., No.443-S., dated the 27th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

General Staff on further consideration think proportion of casualties much what might be expected and do not propose to make any further enquiries. Agent to the Governor General in letter just received says he thinks it possible some dead and wounded were taken away. Please report any reliable information you may have on this subject.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

219 701 23 Pol: Rus. 27

Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press—17-2-1923—2,000.

328

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SECRET.

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No.8444-F-S. B.

Dated Lahore, the 27th February, 1924.

My dear Crerar

The Governor-in-Council has now had an opportunity of considering your telegram No. 256-Pol, despatched last night. In view of the decision of the Government of India conveyed in the first sentence of that telegram the matter is not now one of extreme urgency, and I am, therefore, directed to send the following reply by letter instead of telegraphing it.

2. Our information is to the effect that a second "Shahidi Jatha" of 500 will start tomorrow, arriving at Jaiton, by a slightly different route from that taken by the first "jatha" on March the 14th. It is improbable that Gandhi's advice will be accepted by the leaders. The Governor-in-Council proposes to arrange for a body of about 100 armed police, and if possible a squadron of Cavalry, to precede the "jatha" by one march from Makhu (their first halting place after crossing the Sutlej river into Ferozepore) as far as the Nabha border. The object of this body of men, which will be accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur, will be primarily to discourage spectators and sympathizers of the "jatha" from joining in its march: and the knowledge that this armed force will be available to deal with fugitives in case there is a second affray at Jaiton should, in His Excellency's opinion, have a strong deterrent effect.

3. The Governor-in-Council accepts with some regret the decision of the Government of India regarding his suggestion as to the possibility of some relaxation of the conditions governing actual entry into the gurdwara. He again ventures to press the view that, in order to justify the action of Government in the Eyes of loyal Sikhs, in any statement of the conditions that may be published it should be made clear that

no member of the "jatha" will ultimately be prevented from attending the "Akhand Path" if he awaits his turn; and that it should be added that the limit of 50 will not necessarily be rigorously adhered to if it is found possible without risk of disorder to admit a larger number at any one time.

4. With reference to the last paragraph of your telegram, you will have seen in the I.N.A. telegrams of this morning that Swami Onkaranand has been arrested together with the printer and publisher of the objectionable pamphlet that was despatched to Members of the Legislative Assembly.

5. I take this opportunity of enclosing for the information of the Government of India a copy of a report dated the 25th of February received from the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar regarding the situation at Amritsar.

Yours sincerely

H D Craik

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
DELHI.

(M.H).

P.S. The Governor in Council desires me to add that in his opinion the stipulation that the leaders of the "jatha" should sign a written agreement to abide by the conditions governing entry to the gurdwara might be dispensed with, a verbal agreement being considered sufficient. His Excellency understands that the Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States, concurs in this view.

H D Craik

221 + 234 17

Confidential.

Copy of a letter, dated the 25th of February, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division, Lahore.

The following is the history of the events since the 21st. All sorts of exaggerated rumours first came in. Casualities were put in hundreds in fact in thousands. More or less correct news was in circulation at 2 p.m. on the 22nd. In the evening the special edition of the Civil & Military came in and was atonce distributed through the City. I had a thousand copies printed in Urdu and these were posted in the City by the morning of the 23rd and were distributed in the Ilaqas during the same day. The S. G. P. Committee were firs in the field on the 22nd with a very exaggerated account (copy of which I enclose) and the 'Onward' followed this up on the 23rd with an euqlly stirring special edition. However the correct number of casualities is pretty generally accepted; but there are of course varying stories as to what actually happened. On the 23rd evening I called a meeting of about 25 of the leading Musalman, Hindu and Sikh Honorary Magistrates and Municipal Commissioners and they agreed to issue a manifesto saying that they had no reason to disbelieve the Government communique and calling upon all good citizens to help in the preservation of law and order. Yesterday the four Sikh signatories Sir Arur Singh, S. Sundar Singh Ramgarhia, S. Nihal Singh and S. Atma Singh Man were violent abused in Akali meetings and Nihal Singh and Sundar Singh ha recanted and I believe are issuing a notice saying that wher they signed the manifesto they had not the opportunity of hearing the S. G. P. Committee's version of the case, which of course is a lie.

2. So much for publicity. There were meetings on the 22nd of the Working Committee of the S. G. P. Committee and the Akali Dal. The S. G. P. Committee passed resolutions

asking the Akali Dal for a thousand men as soon as possible declaring that the Jathas will be sent to Jaito until a hundred and one Akhand Paths have been finished, announcing that until a general meeting could be held, the Working Committees resolutions should be valid for all purposes and resolving to start a fund of Rs. 50,000/- for the Jaito martyrs. The Akali Dal meeting agreed to provide as many men as the S. G. P. Committee wanted. Diwans have been held morning and evening. The attendance has varied from 3 thousand to 8 thousand. Considerable Jathas have come in from Sheikhupura (some four hundred), Sialkot (about 60) and other districts. The next Jatha will leave Amritsar on the 28th and arrive in Jaito on the 14th. It will consist of 500. It is rumoured; but I cannot confirm it, that a third Jatha will follow on the 1st of March.

3. It is rather hard to estimate the effect of the 21st on the villages in general. An attendance of 8 thousand at a time like this is by no means out of the way. The number of Akalis in the Darbar Sahib is reported to be between 2,500 and 3,000; but I do not think that the ordinary villager is coming in much and I think that the firm action taken has had the effect of emphasising the distinction between the real Akali and the mildly sympathetic non-Akali. That the next Jatha will be well received on the March marches there is no doubt; but when I was in camp last week I could find no enthusiasm at all for restarting the Akhand Path at Jaito, and I do not think, as far as my present information goes, that this enthusiasm has now been created. If I am right then the next Jatha should arrive at Jaiton with few outside people accompanying it.

4. It is not generally known and has not been mentioned in many speeches that any offer was made to the first Jatha that they could all visit the Gurdwara provided they go by fifties. When this is known, I think it will have some effect. I am anxious that any communique which may

be issued by Government on this subject should be communicated to me atonce in order that I may take steps to give immediate publicity. I have just heard that three doctors who went from here to Jaito to look after the wounded have published an appreciative report of the hospital there and the treatment of the wounded. I propose to give this as much publicity as I can.

D.O. No. Camp/10 224 237

Office of the Administrator,

Nabha State,

C a m p J a i t u .

Dated, Feb. 27, 1924

My dear Minchin,

I have this morning received a copy of a telegram to the Punjab Government from the Home Department of the Govt. of India, in which it is stated that for certain reasons it has been decided to allow a second jatha to come to Jaitu, and that a such second jatha should be, as far as possible, treated in all respect in the same manner as the first.

Under these circumstances it is most necessary that we should evacuate the present prisoners from Jaitu as soon as possible. I have therefore given orders for preparation of a temporary jail in Nabha for their reception. This will not be a difficult matter, and I have asked Ogilvie to put the State Engineer on to it at once. I have selected a place in a small 'bir' well away from the City, where there is an excellent building with a substantial compound. This part of our arrangements will be simple.

It will however be necessary to ask for help from outside for guards as all my available Forces are at Jaitu, and I am unable to spare any of them in view of the advent of the second jatha. I would ask therefore that arrangements be made either from the Punjab or elsewhere for a sufficient force to guard these prisoners who roughly number 700.

It is my intention that as soon as preparations are completed, these prisoners should be removed by a special train during the night time to Nabha. This would avoid any undue demonstration at the various stations en route. For this purpose we would require some 14 or 15 prison vans. I have 4 already at Jaitu. I would ask therefore that arrangements be made with the N. W. Railway for another 11 broad gauge prison vans to be sent here when I wire for them.

The investigation of the case would naturally be transfered to Nabha on the removal of the prisoners there. I would ask you to let me know as soon as possible whether these arrangements are feasible.

I ask for the removal of all prisoners in one special train in view of the fact that our Police is limited in number, and that if all prisoners are removed at one time, the Force detailed to guard them will be able to return speedily to Jaitu.

Everything is quiet here. I hear that there are objectionable rumours flying about in Nabha, and that these all are traceable to the same sources about which I am writing you separately.

[redacted] statements have been received from prisoners who were wounded while with the Akalis on the 21st, on the subject of -

(1) The summoning of the Durli Jatha by the Jathadar of the Shahedi Jatha

(2) To the possession and use of fire arms by the same, and

(3) to the effect that half a mile from Jaitu the jathadar of the Shahedi Jatha called upon the Jathadar of the Durli Jatha to take his men to the ~~action~~ front and to do the part that had been apportioned to him.

All this shews that although the Shahedi Jatha ~~him~~self took no part in the actual violence they ~~confounded~~ conived at it actively, and ~~it~~ I am strongly of the opinion that the whole of this jatha should be dealt with criminally and should by no means be allowed to escape the consequences of their actions.

I am having the statements to which I have alluded to above recorded by a Magistrate and when they are completed I will send them to the Govt. of India and forward you copies at the same time.

Copies of this have been sent to Govt. of India and the Punjab Govt. as usual.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd) J. Wilson Johnston

Lt. Col. A. B. Minchin, C.I.E., I.A.,
Agent to the Governor General,
Punjab States,
Lahore.

Poll/28 227 2nd 446. 18

Telegram R., dated and reed. the 28th February 1934.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated to Punjab States).

Information has been received that two of wounded removed to Ferozepore have died three slightly wounded men have been brought in here from Moga tahsil, Ferozepore district under custody.

(P.S.V. 6.3.2. & Home Dept.)

-228- 2nd

480.79

Telegram R., No.453-S., dated the 28th February 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Punjab Government wiring yesterday report jatha of 500 starting today. Rumour about third jatha starting 1st March not confirmed. We must know immediately for purposes of announcement which terms you intend to offer jatha. Punjab Government attach great importance to offer of admission in batches and consider that limit of 50 need not be rigorously adhered to if it is found possible without risk of disorder to admit larger number at one time. Government of India are inclined to think offer should be repeated in terms in which you actually made it last time but do not know whether you made offer regarding batches merely as an alternative to admission of 50 only or as sole offer. Please report facts and wire your views at once.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

224 247 80

447.

Telegram P., No.322/R, dated and recd. the 28th Feby. 1924

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Administrator, Nabha reports that the special magistrate was on the point of writing his findings in the enquiry after completing the record of evidence. To enable the Government of India to arrive at a decision as to the number of persons to be prosecuted, the Magistrate has now been ordered to record additional evidence. It has been suggested to Wilson-Johnston that an additional magistrate should be employed so as to save time and that the findings on the evidence already recorded should be forwarded. This refers to your telegram No.436-S, dated the 26th February 1924.

(P.S.V., G.S.D. & Home Dept.)

230 WS 81

D 967 — D 29. 2. 24.

To Dr H.S. Love M.L.A.
and other members of
the Leg. Assembly.

Gentlemen,

I have the
honour to acknowledge
the receipt of your
letter of the 27th
February which I shall,
as requested, submit
to the Executive as soon
as possible.

I. 28/2

231 244

455.

Telegram ---- R.

From ---- The Political Secy to the Govt. of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To ----- The Administrator, Nabha, Jaito.

(Repeated to Punjab States.)

No.455-S.

Dated the 28th February 1924.

Your telegram of yesterday. Kitchlew. Government of India do not favour Sections 121 and 125 and would prefer to proceed on simplest charges possible. Please send us evidence before putting case in Court. As regards Gidwani would it not be sufficient to send him back to jail after formal cancellation of suspension order under Section 401. Counsel should be permitted to appear on both sides and need not be restricted to local men. Have written you a letter today.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

232 245 8

449.

Telegram ——— R.

From ——— The Administrator, Nabha, Jaito.

To ——— The Political Secy to the Govt. of India inthe Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Dated (and recd.) the 28th February 1924.

I agree that offer should be exactly the same as to first Jatta viz. that no more than 50 members of Jatta should be admitted at one time to the Gurdwara. I think it is further necessary to limit time. Avowed intention is now to hold 101 Akandpaths which would take at least 200 to 250 days: this cannot be permitted. I would suggest one Akandpath only should be allowed. This would take from 48 to 60 hours.

———

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

233

2 MB

448. 34

Telegram ------ P.

From ---- The A. G. G., Punjab States, Lahore.

To ------ The Political Secy to the Govt. of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

No.324-R.

Dated (and recd.) the 28th February 1924. Recd. 3-20 p.m.

The Administrator, Nabha, reports that the evidence against Gidwani and Kitchlew has been carefully examined. Within the next two days they will be challaned in Nabha under sections 121 and 125 read with section 109, and under sections 307 and 148 read with section 149 of the Indian Panal Code. To help in the preparation of the complaint, we have employed Lala Durga Prasad, Pleader of Ferozepur. In accordance with the existing rules, Wilson Johnston strongly recommends that no outside counsel should be allowed to appear for the defence. He proposes that Durga Prasad should undertake the prosecution, but will abandon the proposal if it is considered unfair. I would suggest that we should adhere to old practice and disallow pleaders on both sides.

Telegraphic instructions are requested.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

234 27 150. 83

Telegram R., dated the 28th and reed. the 29th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated to Punjab States).

I telegraph the following extracts from a statement of a member of Shahidi Jatta made voluntarily:

"At Hari Kipattan we crossed the river. Before crossing the river the head of Jathedar of the Shahidis told Darli Jatta to go away. Some men of D. Jatta replied we will go away now but we will meet you again at Landi or Bargari without fail."

"On arrival at Landi some thousands of Darli Jatta joined us including many who were sent back from Hari Kipattan. A large Dewan was held at close of which a member of D.Jatta stood up and addressed Shahidis saying I have brought 500 men for your safety but you must arrange for our food in your own Langar. Shahidis gave no reply but these 500 men were fed from the Langar."

"We left Bargari. Within the first mile we were joined by thousands of people who were armed with lathis, dang, chavis, gandasas and Takwas and I also noticed that ten or twelve of them were armed with guns; those who were not armed cut down branches of trees. Shortly after the head of J. of the Shahidis halted Jatta which formed line at head of Jathedar of the Shahidis then addressed D. Jatta who were armed with guns, lathis, chavis, axes, etc. saying Khalsa Ji be ready, the time for your work has now arrived. A Sikh mounted on a white pony carrying a gun who appeared to be a leader of D.Jatta addressed latter saying do not mind anything and form

up

up on flanks Jatta".

"On arriving near Jaito a British Officer accompanied by 3 or 4 State officials met Jatta: British Officer out of respect to Granth Sahib took off his topi and spoke to Jatta whereupon some of D. Jatta said to S. Jatta pay no attention, continue to advance. On this the D. Jatta rushed at the British Officer and his officials who had to retreat. At this time D. Jatta had all raised their weapons. Firing then commenced and I actually saw a member of D. Jatta fire a gun in the direction of officials. This man was a Sikh".

"D. Jatta accompanied S. Jatta with the consent of Jathedar of the Shahidis who could have stopped them if he wanted to."

Addressed to Political Secretary, repeated to Punjab States with request that he will inform the Government of the Punjab.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 29th February 1924.

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated Punstates).

In view of fact that second Jatta has left Amritsar and also that information has been received that they intend to expedite their march and further to send out recruiting party on route I desire to receive definite orders as to action I am expected to take. If a non violent Shahidi Jatta of any dimension presents itself I am prepared to deal with it on lines already indicated with present force at my disposal if however Jatta is supported by other Akalis of violent nature as was last Jatta I do not consider that I am justified in asking officials or troops to run the risks that were incurred on 21st. I therefore propose in this eventuality to warn invaders on State boundaries calling on them not to enter State territory. In case of their refusing to obey this order I propose to hand over situation to Officer Commanding troops as a military operation since the invaders will be an enemy force with definite hostile intention. In view of necessity for making all preparations I ask for urgent instructions.

(F.S.V., U.S.S. & Home Dept.)

Telegram.R. 468

From.... The Deputy Secretary Political to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Jaito.

To..... The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.
(Addressed to Punjab Government.)
Dated and recd the 1st March 1924.

CLEAR THE LINE.

This afternoon Rai Sahib Amar Nath, extra Assistant Commissioner on special duty at Jaito received a letter from Rai Sahib Ganesh Das warning him to be on his guard. Letter was brought by a Mahant personal friend of Amar Nath who made statement to the effect that at 8 p.m. on February 29th at house of Kundan Singh in Chowk Prang Das Amritsar he overheard conversation between Amar Singh of Chabhal Bahadur Singh of Tut and Narayan Singh Chima. Amar Singh told others that they had held meeting at 4 p.m. on February 29th and had selected ten men of Darli Jatta who were to proceed to Jaito in disguise for the purpose of assassinating officers on duty at Jaito before arrival of second Jatta. Reason for informers visit to Jaito is special friendship with and anxiety for safety of Lala Amar Nath. I suggest immediate despatch of selected C.I.D officers to Jaito and Amritsar.

-6-

238 251 89

Telegram.P. 467

From..... The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To..... The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab Lahore.

No. 467-S.

Dated the 1st March 1924.

Your telegram of ~~xxx~~ 1st. Government of India are issuing statement and have incorporated first amendment suggested by you, but think it better not to adopt second.

Copies to P.S.V., G.S.B. and Home Deptt.

239 252 457. 90

Telegram R., No.349-R., dated and reed. the 29th February 1924.

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States, Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi. (Xx Addressed Administrator).

With reference to transfer of 700 Akali prisoners to Nabha, staff of one jailer, two assistants, 4 head and 25 ordinary warders are being sent to Nabha to supervise them. Staff will take orders solely from you. Please arrange accommodation for them. Regarding guards Punjab Government state that sufficient armed police could not be spared without risk which they are reluctant to undertake. Can you provide armed force from troops in Nabha State or Maler Kotla from Jaito for the purpose ? Otherwise Government of India will have to be asked for extra troops for that purpose.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

240 91 25 463.

Telegram R., No.463-S., dated the 29th February 1924.

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi,

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

My telegram No.628 S-P, dated 23rd February. Since occurrence on 21st February situation at Jaito has been quiet. Following are further details of occurrence on 21st. Number of dead and wounded picked up on 21st, 14 and 34 respectively. Subsequently 5 of the wounded died giving deaths 19 and it is now reported that 2 more have died. It is certain that some slightly wounded escaped into Ferozepur District and Faridkot State. 4 such have been reported. Total casualties as at present reported are therefore 21 dead and 33 wounded. Return of rounds fired on 21st was buck-shot 46 service ammunition 226 of which 125 were fired by British Indian and 101 by State Forces. Estimate of death casualties is corroborated by Prabandak Committee report. Buckshot was fired by mixed forces of Police and State Infantry. About 700 men are detained in custody at Jaito. They are being removed to Nabha. Question of action to be taken against them is under our consideration. Present view is that only few ring-leaders should be prosecuted, remainder being allowed to depart. Judicial investigations are proceeding. Evidence has been received from several persons including one member of Shahidi Jatha as to use of firearms and as to summoning of Akalis with fire-arms before arrival at Jaito by Jathadar of Shahidi Jatha. Administrator states that it can be proved that firearms were made use of by Jatha. Punjab Government reports that excitement in Amritsar over Jaito affair is on the whole rather less than was anticipated. But

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the affair has never-the-less caused great sensation throughout the Punjab and among politically-minded class. On 25th February Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya moved an adjournment in Legislative Assembly to discuss occurrence at Jaito. Discussion was, however, ruled out of order by combined operation of Legislative Rules 12 and 23. On 26th the Akali situation in the Punjab was discussed by members in the Assembly and the Home Member made a statement regarding actual occurrence at Jaito. He contradicted false, malicious and exaggerated statements which had been circulated by disloyal elements in the Punjab.

On 23rd February a Pamphlet headed "Jaito Massacre - Another Jallianwala Bagh" "100 Killed and wounded" "Women arrested and whipped" was published in Amritsar. The author of this has since been arrested. The pamphlet was distributed broadcast among Members of Legislative Assembly and contained the following allegations:-

(1) That women were brutally whipped and were carried to Fort and lashed for fault of attending the wounded

(2) That Machine Guns stood ready for a signal from the Administrator

(3) That from the Fort came a booming sound of the shot one and then another

(4) That Machine Guns showered volleys indiscriminately on the crowd

(5) That whoever tried to administer medical aid in indigenous ways met with merciless cudgelling.

There is no atom of truth in any of these allegations and they have been categorically denied both by the Home Member in Legislative Assembly and through our Publicity Organisation. Medical aid was supplied to the wounded from our own Military Store and they were attended by I.M.S. doctors from Ferozepur and by Indian physicians from Amritsar who in letter which has been published thanked the Administrator for facilities

given

242-93

given to them. All available correspondence has been forwarded by this mail. The remainder will be sent next week.

Gandhi has made announcement in which he appears to doubt whether Akalis acted up to professions of non-violence and advises them not to send second Jatha at present until leaders have had time to consult, but we learn this morning that second Jatha of 500 started on 28th. Government of India have decided to pursue same policy in regard to this second Jatha and have made announcement to that effect. It will not arrive at Jaito till 14th and manifesto has been issued by Akalis appealing to public that crowd should not accompany second Shahidi Jatha. It is possible therefore that violence will not be used on this occasion and we need not say that our instructions to Administrator will emphasise necessity of avoiding use of force against Jatha unless their attitude is such as to render resort to force unavoidable. You will be kept informed of developments as they occur.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

243 464 94 25-6

Telegram.R.

From..... The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To..... The Administrator, Nabha, Jaitu.

No. 464-S.

Dated the 1st March 1924.

Your telegram of yesterday Government of India desire that you will follow procedure adopted with last Jatha. The choice of the spot in Nabha territory at which you will meet Jatha to offer them the terms is a matter for your discretion, but Government of India cannot agree to your handing over situation to military commander immediately boundary is crossed. You must retain control yourself up to the last possible moment, as you appear to have done on last occasion.

Copies to P.S.V., G.S.B. and Home Dept.

244 253 95

Telegram — R. 462-S.

From

The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department

To

The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab.

No.463-S, dated the 29th February 1924.

Government of India propose to communicate to Press tomorrow the following. Begins. An Akali Jatha numbering about five hundred left Amritsar for Jaito on the evening of the 20th February. It will march through the Ferozepore District and is expected to reach Jaito on the 14th March. The object of this Jatha is ostensibly the same as that of the previous Jatha, the arrival of which at Jaito on the 21st February resulted in grave disturbance. The Nabha State authorities are giving this Jatha notice in the same terms that were offered to the previous Jatha i.e. if the object of the Jatha is purely religious one, they will be allowed to visit the Gurdwara, but that on no account will permission be given for the Gurdwara to be used for the purpose of political propaganda. In accordance with this policy the Jatha is being informed that its members will be permitted to visit the Gurdwara in batches of fifty at a time for the purpose of holding one "Akhandpath" on the understanding being given that on the conclusion of the same they depart from the State forthwith and that during their stay in the State no political speeches are to be made or meetings held. Ends. It is desirable that message should go out soon and if Punjab Government have no criticisms to offer Government of India would like to have them before noon to-morrow. The wording of the message follows very closely that of the previous message which was issued when the first Jatha left Amritsar.

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245 258 96

Telegram R., dated and reed. the 1st March 1924.

From- The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab,
Lahore,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Your telegram of the 29th February No.462-S. This Government recommend substitution of "announced to be" for "ostensibly" and the addition after "fifty at a time" of "or such other number as may be found feasible" otherwise agree.

(F.S.V., C.S.S. & Home Dept.)

246 2-9 97

Telegram.

From...The Secy. tothe Govt. of India, Home Dept, Delhi.

To....The Chief Secretary to the Govt. of the Punjab, Lahore.

No....D-727-Poll.

Dated the 3rd March, 1924.

Administrator of Nabha reports that he received no intimation of actual departure of second jatha from Amritsar till 2nd March. Government of India attach greatest importance to Administrator being kept regularly and directly informed with as little delay as possible of all developments bearing on situation at Jaitho and trust that every effort will be made to ensure this.-

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(Copy sent to F & P Dept.)

A.D. 247 260 94

No. 472

Telegram R. dated the 3rd March 1924 (2 p.m.)

From- The Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

You asked me what procedure was to be adopted for service of notice on Jatha. Please see Foreign and Political Department telegram of 1st March No.464-S. which says that Government of India desire you to follow procedure adopted with last jatha but leave to your discretion the spot at which jatha is to be met and offered terms. The notice is to be on lines of notice served on last jatha and in accordance with announcement in press which appears in Pioneer today. If you have any further doubt as to procedure you should adopt please let me know. Ogilvie.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

248 261 97

465.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 1st March 1924.

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

My telegram of the 29th February 349 R. 17 groups from the end kindly read spare any instead of "Maler Kotla" between "or" and "from".

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

2719 26 10

482.

Telegram R., No. nil, dated and recd. the 3rd Feby. 1924.

(Despd. 10 A.M. recd. 2.5 P.M.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

See Section 188 Code of Criminal Procedure as to transfer of cases to British India. Presume Agent to the Governor-General takes the place of Political Agent Phulkian States this should be cleared.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

250 263

489.

Telegram R., No.489-S., dated the 4th March 1924 (3.50 p.m.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Proposal to release members of Shahidi Jatha who apologize and reveal identity and give written undertaking to abstain from agitation is approved.

Government of India think that condition in regard to surrender of yellow robes need not be insisted on. They will leave Jaito discredited and their yellow robes will only make them more conspicuous. Remainder of Jatha should be confined at Bawal as proposed for the present. They can be treated as prisoners under remand. Government of India approve suggestion that those who are to be tried should be tried British India.

Government of India agree with you that aeroplane should not be employed. Please inform military authorities accordingly. Decision on remaining points discussed between you and Ogilvie is being communicated by letter.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

257 264

Sep. 102

Telegram R., dated and recd. 4th February 1924.

(Despd. 11-30 A.M. Recd. 1-30 P.M.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Kindly let me know at once whether proposal to send Shahidi Jatta to Fort at Bawal is approved. It is most necessary to evacuate Jatta without delay and make preparations for their reception at Bawal. Cases against Kitchlew and Gidwani ringleaders of S.Jatta and other rioters are now complete and should be placed in court without delay.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

252 - 267 103

Lahore: "C. & M. Gazette" Press—17-2-1923—2,000.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Punjab Civil Secretariat.

No. 8444-F- **S. B.**

Dated Lahore, the 4th March, 1924.

My dear Crerar

I am desired to forward for the information of the Government of India copies of reports dated the 29th February and 1st March, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, regarding the despatch of the second "Shahidi Jatha".

Yours sincerely,

H. Craik

To

The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department,
DELHI.

(M.H.).

253 268 104

Confidential.

Copy of a D.O. letter dated the 29th February, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division.

The Jatha of 500 left here yesterday evening. It was sent off with even more enthusiasm than the last time. The details of the ceremonies and processions are, in all essentials, the same as for the last Jatha. In it there are said to be 86 men of this district and the rest from the outside districts. With the Jatha will go 10 Akalis in uniform whose special work will be to administer Amrit Parchar to newly enrolled Akalis. Propaganda forms a considerable part of the Jatha's programme. The Jatha was addressed before it left from the Akal Takht and was exhorted to remain non-violent. Emphasis was laid on the fact that its only object was religious, the starting of Akhand Path. The general public were asked not to leave their villages in order to follow the Jatha and it was added that any one who accompanied the Jatha further than Babia Bhai (which I think is the last halt before Jaiton) would be considered an enemy of the Panth. With the idea of making the Jatha entirely independent of outside assistance, a large number of Sewadars than before are being taken. The principle Jathedars are not Amritsar men, and I do not know their names.

2. My usual sources of information say that there is great enthusiasm for this Jatha everywhere and that practically all Sikhs are united in sympathizing with it. Another source of information reports that there is not so much unity as meets the eye and that in the villages even among Akalis it is being said by some that it is useless to fight against the Government.

Copy

Copy of a D.O. letter dated the 1st March, 1924, from the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, to the Commissioner, Lahore Division.

The Jatha left this district this morning. Both at Bahoru and at Chabhal the crowds that met it were large. At a Diwan which was held at Bahoru the Jathedar in addressing the audience laid great stress on the necessity for persons who were not members of the Jatha abstaining from accompanying the Jatha on its march. Inspite of this, out of a company of some five thousand present, about two thousand persisted in accompanying the Jatha on its way. I have not heard yet whether the same thing happened at Chabhal.

2. It is rumoured abroad that the trial of the leaders is to be transferred to Lahore and it is said to have been decided that this shall be marked by an increase of Akali activity in Lahore somehow or the other. One of the suggestions is that the Jatha going to Bhai Bheru from Amritsar should stop a day in Lahore.

3. On the 28th before the Jatha started there was a more or less informal meeting of the Working Committee of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. There was a hot discussion about the message from Gandhi. I am told that the Sikh League party was in favour of stopping the Jathas. This party is more closely connected with the Congress and the non-co-operation movement than the other members of the Committee who are not members of the Sikh League. The latter eventually carried the day and the only result of the discussion was to delay the departure of the Jatha for about four hours. The question will crop up again when the time comes for deciding about the Jatha which is announced for the 22nd of March.

4. I sent a party consisting of S. Hardial Singh, S. Hardit Singh of Panjwar, Honorary Magistrate and some Zaildars to go on a few hours ahead of the Jatha to note the attitude of the

people

people and, if possible, to dissuade them from joining the Jatha. This party reports that the attitude in the villages is about as unpromising as it could be. No one was ready even to listen to the suggestion that they should not produce supplies to the Jatha or go out to meet it. The general view seems to be that the struggle is purely religious and that they are winning. I have had a lot of callers this morning and several of them have told me that people think that Government is afraid. One of the reasons given is that the tone of Government's communiques has been apologetic. Government has said "we only shot because we were shot at". "We only shot at the persons who attacked us". "We only killed a few people". The inference drawn, I am told, is that Government is frightened by what it has done and is meditating coming to terms. The general opinion among my visitors of all sorts is that Government must either stick firmly to its guns or give in at once on the religious point. It is admitted on all sides that in this matter religion is only a mask and that if we give in it will only mean a new morcha somewhere else. The moral is obvious. I think some people have been frightened by the firing.

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256 — 269 486

Telegram P, No. 486-S, dated 4th March 1924 (2-45-p.m.).

From - The Political Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign and Political Deptt., Delhi.

To -- The ~~Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States,~~ Government of the Punjab
Lahore.

(Repeated Punstates and Administrator, Nabha.)

There is no objection on the part of the Government of ~~India~~ India to proposal of the Punjab ~~Government~~ Government that when the ~~Akalis~~ Jatha arrives at Jaito, Members of the Legislative Council should be present there. Government of India consider that another name should be substituted for that of Sangat Singh since the Administrator's objections to him are based on local knowledge.

(Usual dist. P.S.V., G.S.B. and Home.)

257 270

498.

Telegram R. dated 5th March 1924. (2-55 p.m.).

From - The Administrator, Nabha, Jaito.

To -- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Deptt., Delhi.

Ogilvies confidential letter dated March 4th. I approve suggestion that selected Indian Army officers should be present, also Publicity Bureau photographer.

(P.S.V. G.S.B. and Home.)

Nos. 486 & 498.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

S. E.—1.

To

E. H. Brandon, Esquire,

Assistant Secretary

Home Department.

SGP132-1720SGP(6)20-2-22-500,000.

259 272 109

P.S.V.O.

No. 235.

Telegram P.

From Secretary of State.

To Viceroy(Home Dept).

Dated London, the 4th March 1924.

Received the 5th March 1924.

No. 730. Akalis at Jaito. Please refer to your telegrams dated 23rd February No. 628-S & P and No. 463-S dated February 29th. Judging by map first Jatha would pass through British territory first for about 80 miles and then cross narrow strip of Faridkot State before reaching Nabha territory. Was its progress watched and reported? Have you information to show how and from what points the crowd gathered? Are you satisfied that Administrator of Nabha is receiving from the Government of the Punjab such cooperation as is possible and desirable? The policy of leaving Jatha to be dealt with in Nabha territory does not necessarily apply to leaving uncontrolled the unorganised mobs which may gather round it during its march.

Surely the best prospect of enabling Administrator of Nabha to meet situation without use of force will be attained by taking every possible precaution against invasion of armed mob from a British territory.

& By change of letter.

H.O.D.

3 Copies sent to Home Department.

260 273 110

495.

Telegram R., No.495-S., dated the 5th March 1924.(3-55 P.M.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Your telegram 6767 4th March. Government of India would be glad to be kept informed in future in regard to progress of Jatha, its reception by inhabitants of Amritsar and Ferozpur districts, numbers of outside Akalis and others who join it on march and any other circumstance which may seem important.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

261 334 111

499.

Telegram R., No.6858, dated and recd. the 5th March 1924.

(Despd.5-35 p.m. Recd.9-20 p.m.).

From- The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab,
Lahore,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram of the 5th March No.495. Please refer to my demi-official letter No.6853 of today giving account of progress of Jatha through Lahore District. Reception in (grp omitted) similar. Deputy Commissioner Ferozepore requested to send a daily wire to Punjab Government and Administrator. This will be repeated to you.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

262 275

502. 112

Telegram R., No.747, dated the 5th (8-05 p.m.) and recd. the 6th (8-00 a.m.) March 1924.

From- His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,

To - His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi.

Urgent.

Your telegram of the 29th February No.463-S. Have any casualties been reported amongst soldiers, police or women. Can you say what kind of fire-arms were in the possession of Akalis. Question in Parliament March 10th.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

PDL 263 22 7/3

507. 113

Telegram R., No.507-S., dated the 6th March 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Your telegram dated 3rd March. Agent Governor General Punjab States is Political Agent within meaning of Section 188 Criminal Procedure Code.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

505.

Telegram R., dated the 6th (10-40 a.m.) and recd. the 6th (2-45 p.m.) March 1934

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.
(Addressed Punjab Government).

Your letter 8444 F S B. In view of information contained in your No.6853 I would ask that instructions issue to force with Deputy Commissioner Ferozepore to cooperate with forces at my disposal should occasion arise within State limits. These instructions would facilitate matters since if mob with Jatha assume serious proportions I should be forced to call on services of another squadron from Nabha which would entail delay.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

265 278 508. 115

Telegram R., No.508-S., dated the 6th March 1924.

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi,

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Your telegram dated 5th March 747. No casualties occurred among soldiers, police or women. It is difficult to say what kind of firearms were in possession of Akalis. No firearms were picked up, but nine witnesses, three of whom were Akalis who marched with Jatha and the remainder persons from neighbouring villages who appear to have mingled with mob have given evidence before magistrate that they saw among the attacking forces various Akalis armed with (1) "a double barrelled gun" (2) "guns" (3) "a pistol". Door of house on outskirts of Jaitu village was pierced apparently by high velocity bullet of 256 bore which could not have been fired from Government rifle. One villager was wounded by rifle bullet and one got a bullet through his turban. All officers present in firing line unanimously report that firearms were used by Akalis.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 6th March 1924.

(Despd.6-55 p.m. Recd.8-20 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated to Punjab).

CLEAR THE LINE.

Bhai Labh Singh chief Granthi of Mohindar Sahib Darbar Sahib Amritsar who accompanied Jatha on February 21st has made most important statement of which I am forwarding copy by hand. Briefly it is to effect that he did his best to turn back crowd that was armed and accompanying Jatha, that he failed and that in consequence non-violent attitude of Jatha was destroyed. He is most anxious to make second Jatha hear reason. If you agree I propose to take him to Moga on 9th and endeavour to reason with Jatha there. I have had a long talk with him and am convinced of his bona fides. Please telegraph if you agree.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Telegram R., No.513-S., dated the 7th March 1924.(2-35 p.m.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Army Headquarters have asked Northern Command to depute 3 or 4 Sikh Indian Officers to Jaito to witness arrival of Jatha. They will be ready to proceed on 10th. Names will be telegraphed to you when received. What date should they arrive Jaito ?

(P.E.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

268 25

514.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 7th March 1924.

(Recd.10-10 p.m.).

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.513-S. Sikh Indian Officers should reach here on morning of March 13th.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Viceroy to Secretary of State.

Telegram P., No. 212, 7th March 1924. (Despd. for Home Dept.)

No. D.-883. Akalis Jatha. Your telegram dated 4th March, No. 730. Your reading of map is correct. Last halting-place Jaito before entering Nabha territory was in Faridkot State. A close observation was maintained throughout by the Government of the Punjab, but there was no indication of large concourse accompanying Jatha till immediately before its arrival at Jaito. First information was received by Administrator from one of his sowars was at 1-30 P. M. estimating crowd at two thousand. Later report put numbers at eight to ten thousand. At 2-40 P. M. they came in sight. It is therefore clear that greater part of mob joined Jatha after it left its last halting-place at Bargari in Faridkot State not far from Ferozepore District most dangerous portion of which appears to have been a gang of some two or three hundred which local authorities regard as possible embryo Babar Akali organisation. Considerable numbers have been arrested and this matter is under careful investigation.

There appears to have been some defect in prompt communication of intelligence to Administrator to which we have already drawn urgent attention of Punjab Government. Administrator's applications for assistance in all other respects have been fully complied with. The Government of the Punjab have detailed a squadron of cavalry and a force of one hundred armed police under personal direction of Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepore District, with object of preventing sympathisers from joining on March 2nd Jatha which left on 28th February from Amritsar.

As regards measures to be adopted to deal with first Jatha, the views of the Punjab Government in favour of permitting Jatha to pass through British territory to its destination were (1) that the Jatha would probably have unfavourable reception from villages *en route*; (2) that if it adhered to its ostensible character of being purely religious and strictly non-violent, there would be legal difficulties in breaking it up; (3) that any action of this kind in the close vicinity of Amritsar might precipitate extensive developments; and (4) that it would be easier to deal with it in Nabha State territory. They at that stage contemplated that the second Jatha if despatched should be forcibly dispersed. To this course we agreed in recognition of fact that Punjab Government were in best position to frame estimate of situation. Government of the Punjab subsequently considered it advisable that the second Jatha should also be allowed to proceed subject to precautions being taken to prevent the Jatha being joined on its march by unruly elements and the precautions taken have been detailed above. If these are successful, there is a reasonable prospect that second Jatha on its arrival may be dealt with without resort to force. If, however, disturbances are renewed, we shall find it necessary to consider advisability of closing Nabha frontier and taking such other measures as may be requisite to prevent further ingress of Akalis into Nabha territory from British territory.

Hon. Mr. Crerar's 270 2-63

Telegram.

From - The Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepore,
Moga.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department,
Delhi.

No.S.H.W.23.

Dated and received the 7th March 1924.

Jatha arrived Makhu 19/30, 5th. Some Hindus illuminated shops. Rations provided from Zira, Tahsil Sultanpur. Kapurthala Jullundar Lohian spectators estimated 500. A few Majha men noticed, some with lathis. March resumed yesterday morning about eleven. Jatha was entertained enroute near Karahiwala and Mandar. Arrived Kotisekhan about five. Northern gate was decorated, arch erected at encamping ground by Congress men. Spectators estimated about 1300 including 150 Akalis.

271

Telegram.

From -- The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, Lahore.

To -- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

No.7166.

Dated and received the 7th March 1924.

Following is substance of telegram received today from Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepur. Begins. Jatha arrived Makhu night of 5th. Spectators estimated five hundred. March resumed morning 6th to Koti Sikhan which was reached in evening. Spectators there about thirteen hundred including one hundred fifty Akalis. Ends.

272 285 12

41/ 518.

Telegram R, No. 518-S, dated 8th March 1924. (1-10 p.m.)

From - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Dept., Delhi.

To -- The Administrator, Nabha, Jaito.

x Your telegram March 7th. Sikh Officers are being instructed to arrive Jaito on ~~its~~ 12th in order to allow plenty of time.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. and Home.)

520.

Telegram R., No.520-S., dated the 8th March 1924 (7.55 p.m.)

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi,

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

The Second Shahidi Jatha which left Amritsar on the 28th February is now in the Ferozepore District. Its progress is attracting considerable crowds and causing some excitement. Efforts are being made to dissuade people from joining the Jatha in its march, and one of the important men of the former Jatha is going out with the Administrator to meet the Second Jatha and try to reason with them.

Magistrate's report has been received. Magistrate is a Sikh Barrister of well known family. His findings support the official accounts generally and justify the firing. He sums up as follows: Begins.

"It is abundantly clear that the mob and the Shahidi Jatha defied all efforts on the part of people and authorities of the Nabha State to reason with them and chose an unreasonable course. That the mob was in an excited mood and armed with all sorts of weapons including fire arms and prepared to see through the game. They all knew what the game was and even went to the extent of insulting and assaulting the Administrator and after brandishing the weapons have actually used the fire arms. It was but natural and the only course left to the Administrator was to order firing which was not done too soon. The small number of casualties in such a big mob shows that the firing was controlled and did not exceed the exigencies

of

of the moment. The wounded were attended to at once and that but for the complicity of the Droli Jatha (this refers to the most dangerous part of the mob) the unfortunate (events) could not have happened". Ends.

(P.S.V. - G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Roll 16

275

550.

Telegram R., dated and reed. 11th March 1924.
(Despd.9 a.m. Reed.11 a.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu,

To - The Political ~~Deputy~~ Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.527-S. All efforts are being made to make conditions known. Three notices are being served by Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepur. In addition I explained in detail conditions to Ferozepur notables on Sunday and they sent deputation to Jatta on the subject. One further notice will be served at final halting place on 13th.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

276 — 529. 12

Telegram R., No.812, dated the 10th and recd. the 11th March 1924.

(Despd.19-55 Recd.7).

From- His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London,

To - His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi.

PRIORITY.

Your telegram of the 29th February No.463. Please telegraph urgently what exactly is meant by pursue same policy in regard to second Jatha and what you have publicly announced. I presume policy is that indicated in detail in your telegram February 16th No.372.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

277

527.

Telegram R., No.527-S., dated the 10th March 1924.

(9.30 p.m.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

(Repeated Punjab and Punstates).

Government of India assume that all possible efforts are being made to acquaint all members of the Jatha with the conditions on which entry to Gurudwara will be permitted.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

278

128

Telegram-R, No. 525-S, dated 10th March 1924 (4 p.m.) 525.

From - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Deptt., Delhi.

To -- The Administrator, Nabha, Jaito.

Rai Sahib Pindi Lal Official Photographer with Assistant arrive Jaito on 12th March Wednesday at 7-3a.m. Following Sikh officers have been selected to witness arrival Shahidi Jatha (1) Risaldar Fauja Singh, ~~12thxCavalry~~ Probyn's Horse; (2) Lieutenant Tautar Singh, 12th Cavalry, (3) Subadar-Major Thakur Singh, 16th Punjab Regiment. Fourth officer name not yet available. Lordist will telegraph to you time of their arrival on 12th.

(P.S.V., G.S.B, and Home.)

279 (12)

Telegram R., dated and reed. the 12th March 1924.

(Despd.7-35 a.m. Reed.8-05 a.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Your telegram No.534-S. On further consideration I am of opinion that gentlemen referred to therein should not be permitted to remain in Jaito after the morning of March 15th provided that there is no trouble. I hope to leave here on 15th and have suggested that I visit Delhi and consult you it would not be fair to State officials to have these men here in my absence. The two Sikhs are Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee men of extreme views.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

280 537. 130

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 12th March 1924.

(Despd.0-10 a.m. Recd.1-25 a.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.534-S.

I have no objection provided that it is made quite clear to these gentlemen that they cannot be permitted to be in a position of danger or in one in which they might hamper authorities if there is any repetition of events of February 21st. I also think that a time limit should be placed on their stay here. It will be impossible to provide accommodation for all available is occupied by our officers and other visitors who have been already authorised to come here. This should be made clear to them.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

281 131

529.

Telegram R., No.529-S., dated the 11th March 1924.

(4-50 p.m.)

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi.

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

PRIORITY.

Your telegram dated 5th March No.74$ to Home Department paragraph 2.Nabha. Following Communique is being issued. Begins. In the speech delivered by him in the House of Lords on the 26th February, Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State for India, in referring to the case of the Maharaja of Nabha, stated that "it was intimated to him (the Maharaja) that he should pay compensation to his neighbour and should demit his office in favour of his son, his son being placed under a Regency".

The statement made by the Secretary of State for India is in fact inaccurate, and, in reply to a reference made by the Government of India, Lord Olivier has authorised them to state that in speaking on this subject he used the expression in question without reference to his notes, and that by a defective recollection of the facts (which it will be remembered occurred some months before the present Government came into power) he was betrayed into representing that the Government of India had actually taken a course which would probably have been necessary had not the Maharaja anticipated action of the Government by his resignation. Ends.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

2821 132

533.

Telegram R., No.533-S., dated the 11th March 1924.(8 p.m)

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi.

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

PRIORITY.

Your telegram dated the 10th March No.812. Policy to be pursued in regard to second Jatha is that indicated in my telegram No.372-S. dated 16th February, viz: Notices are being served on Jatha which is expected to arrive Jaito on 14th March, that if the object of the Jatha is a purely religious one they will be allowed to visit the Gurdwara at Jaito, but that on no account will permission be given for the Gurdwara to be used for purpose of political propaganda. In accordance with this policy Jatha is being informed that its members will be permitted to visit the Gurdwara in batches of 50 at a time for the purpose of holding one Akhandpath on the understanding being given that on the conclusion of the same they depart from the State forthwith and that during their stay in the State no political speeches are made or meetings held. Announcement to this effect has also been published in the newspapers. All efforts are being made to make conditions known. Three notices are being served by Deputy Commissioner Ferozepur. In addition Administrator explained policy in detail to Ferozepore notables and they sent deputation to Jatha on subject. One further notice will be served at final halting place on 13th. As you have been informed

in

in Home Department telegram No.212 dated 7th March cavalry and armed police are accompanying Jatha. Information has been received that a third Jatha of 1000 is to be despatched from Amritsar to Jaito on 22nd March.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

284

534-134

Telegram R., No.534-S., dated the 11th March 1924
(9.40 p.m.)
From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Malaviya, Sinha, Gulab Singh and Kartar Singh, all members of Legislative Assembly have asked to be allowed to visit Jaito in order to witness arrival of Jatha and to stay there for such time afterwards as they may think necessary. Hailey and I think permission should be given it being made clear to them that they will be under your orders while they are in Nabha territory. Can you let me know by clear line wire before 8 tomorrow whether you see any objection ?

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

2855 13

546.

Telegram R., No.546-S., dated the 12th March 1924.

From- The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi,

To - His Excellency the High Commissioner for Iraq,
Beghdad.

Your telegram 106 March 9th. Public opinion in India regarding Khilafat developments not yet definitely crystallised but Local Governments are being asked to report.

(Usual distribution).

286 136

542.

Telegram P., No.51-S., dated and recd.11th March 1924.

From- His Excellency the High Commissioner for Iraq,
Baghdad,

To - The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.
(Addressed London No.130 repeated Beyrout,
Constantinople, Cairo and Jerusalaem).

In regard to Khalifat leaders of Moslem opinion are consulting, but no decision has yet been taken in Mesopotamia. By order of Feisal statements in Reuters emanating from Amman to effect that King Hussain has been proclaimed Khalif of Mesopotamia have been suppressed.

(U.D. & Home Dept.)

287 137

547.

Telegram R., No.nil, dated and recd. the 13th March 1924.

(Despd.11.55 a.m. Recd.12.55 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Reference Ogilvie's letter dated 12th. With regard to Kitchlew I am not clear as to legal aspects of section 144 Code of Criminal Procedure. I therefore propose to postpone action until I have consulted you further. In any event I do not think that he should be released till after second Jatha has been disposed of.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

288 138

544.

Telegram R., No.544-S., dated the 12th March 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi,

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Following letter has been issued today by Sir Malcolm Hailey to the four members of the Legislative Assembly who will be coming to Jaito. Begins:- In reply to your letter of yesterday, I write to let you know that there will be no objection to your going to Jaito, and staying there until the Jatha arrives and for such period afterwards as the Administrator may determine. It is not unlikely that if there is no trouble on the 14th, he will ask you to leave on the morning of the next day. You will no doubt understand that the position at Jaito is not quite the same as it would be in British India. Like everyone else who is there, you will be subject to any orders that may be issued by the Administrator during your stay in Nabha territory, and should there be any risk of violence being used by the Akalis, it will not be possible to permit you to occupy a position where you might be exposed to danger and might hamper the authorities in any way. The Administrator desires me to let you know that it will not be possible for him to provide accommodation for you. You will no doubt be prepared to make your own arrangements. I shall be obliged if you will let me know when you expect to arrive at Jaito, so that I may telegraph to the Administrator. Ends.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

289 545. 139

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 12th March 1923.

(Despd.1-25 p.m. Recd.3-10 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaitu,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your 534-S. I have been able to arrange accommodation for four members of Legislative Assembly who intend to visit Jaitu. Please telegraph time of arrival.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

290

548.

Telegram R., No.548-S., dated the 13th March 1924.

(11-40 a.m.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

Number of other applications been received from Legislators to visit Jaito 14th. It has been decided to limit number to 8. We do not yet know for certain how many of these will go. Kartar Singh and Gulab Singh arrive 7 a.m. tomorrow. Probably any others who come will travel by same train. Will send you list of names if possible later. One of the party will probably be Vedamurti of Council of State.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

291

552.

Telegram R., No.552-S., dated the 13th March 1924.

(8-40 p.m.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi,

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Following are names of Legislators proceeding tonight Jaito in addition to those already telegraphed:-

(1) Lohokare (2) Kidwai (3) Sadashiva Bhat.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

292

551.

Telegram R., No.551-S., dated the 13th March 1924.
(4-10 P.M.)

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi,

To - The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

The following is personal message from Viceroy to you. Begins. His Excellency thoroughly understands your difficulties and the trying circumstances you have to face. He is aware that your patience will be tried by obtuseness and obstinacy of the Akalis: but he feels sure that you will take every precaution which you can devise to obviate the necessity of having to fire on the Jatha, although if force becomes inevitable it must be used. His Excellency trusts that you will make it quite clear to outside visitors if suitable opportunity offers that you have done your utmost to explain what you are prepared to allow the members of the Jatha to do and what you forbid them from doing and the reasons for the restrictions in the latter case.

It may be that some of these people may desire to influence the Jatha to agree to the conditions imposed by you and to convince them of their reasonableness and of course you should permit and even encourage this course if there is any prospect of thereby avoiding collision. His Excellency is thinking of your specially difficult situation and sends you this message to assure you of his support and of his confidence that you will do your best to combine patience and restraint with the necessary firmness. Ends.

(P. S. to G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

293 143

550.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 13th March 1924.

(Despd.8-30 p.m. Recd.11-30 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your telegram No.551-S. I am deeply grateful to His Excellency for his personal message and would request you to convey to him my sincere thanks and to assure him that every possible means will be used to avoid having to fire. I have been in conference with members of Punjab Legislative Council all afternoon and they have sent a telegram to Shiromani G.P.C. asking for their aid to settle matters on a reasonable basis which would take the form of admitting governors of the Jatha as can reasonably be accommodated in the Gurdwara at one time and ensure that all members of the Jatha will participate in Akand Path on guarantee that there will be nothing political and that whole Jatha will leave on termination of Akand Path, that is within three days of commencement. These gentlemen will meet members of legislative Assembly on arrival tomorrow and will request them to accompany them to Bambia and reason with the Jatha and its followers who are said to be in a very uncompromising frame of mind. I am not too sanguine of results.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

294

559.

Telegram R., No.553-S., dated the 13th March 1924.

From-The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi,

To --The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Only six Legislators have left by mail -

(1) Malaviya
(2) Gulab Singh
(3) Kartar Singh
(4) Sinha
(5) Veda Murti
(6) Rangaswami Ayyengar.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

295 149

561.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 14th March 1924.

(Despd.5-45 p.m. Recd.6-30 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

In continuation of my previous telegram. Jatha arrived unaccompanied. After considerable discussion they consented to a peaceful arrest and were led by myself and members of Legislative Assembly and Punjab Legislative Council to enclosures. This gives time for possible agreement to be come to and I am proceeding Delhi by mail train this evening and will come direct to you on arrival.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

296

556.

Telegram R., No.556-S., dated the 14th March 1924 (6.15 pm.)

From- His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi,

To - His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Six members of Central Legislatures were permitted to proceed Jaito and witness arrival of Jatha. Jatha arrived without following. Administrator spent whole morning in discussion with members of Legislatures regarding possible solution of question. Only point he insisted on was definite time limit for Akand Path on assured guarantee. Attempt was made by Members of Legislatures to induce Jatha to consent to time limit, but it was met by blank refusal. Members were most anxious that Jatha should be allowed to enter Gurdwara unconditionally and that conditions should be arranged subsequently. To this Administrator could not agree as it might well expose Government to accusation of mala fides. In these circumstances arrangements were made for arrest of Jatha and confinement in barbed wire enclosure.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

297 147

560.

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 14th March 1924.

(Despd.14-55 p.m. Recd.4-15 p.m.)

From- The Administrator of Nabha State, Jaito,

To - The Political Secretary to the Gogernment of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

Shahidi Jatha arriving without following. I have ~~xxpx~~ spent whole morning in discussion with members of Legislative Assembly regarding possible solution of question. Only point I insisted on was definite time limit for Akand Path on assured guarantee. Attempt made by members of Legislative Assembly to induce Jatha to ~~xx~~ consent to time limit but it was met by blank refusal. Members most anxious that Jatha should be allowed to enter Gurdwara unconditionally and that conditions should be arranged subsequently. To This I could not agree as it might well expose Government to accusation of mala fides. In these circumstances arrangements have been made for arrest of Jatha and confinement in cage.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

298

570.

Telegram P., No.431-R., dated and recd.16th March 1924.
(Despd.11-10 a.m. Recd.11-45 a.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

His Highness Maharaja of Patiala shows great concern that Members of Assembly and Legislative Council were allowed to visit Jaito March 14th. He thinks that use will certainly be made of this concession as a strong lever to foster agitation in favour of interference by legislative bodies in the affairs of Native States. This he considers should not be allowed. His Highness hopes for the same reason that Members of the Assembly or Legislative Council will not be authorised to negotiate compromises regarding Jaito. It is further stated by His Highness the Maharaja that hopelessness of negotiations indicated by fact that yesterday nephew of Mehtab Singh and other Sikh agitators openly declared before him that they would start Morchas at two other places in Nabha State whatever happens Jaito. Enquiries are being made by me whether this represents Sikh leaders' real intention.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

299 1409

Telegram R. 563.

Telegram R, No. 563-S, dated Delhi 15th March 1924.

From - H.E. the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Dept.) Delhi.

To -- H.M's Secretary of State for India, London.

My telegram dated 14th March, No. 556-S. After considerable discussion Jatha consented to peaceful arrest and were led to enclosures. Legislators returned Delhi this morning. Question of disposal of present Jatha and of measures to prevent further Jathas is under consideration.

(F.S.V. G.S.B. and Home).

Telegram R., dated and recd. the 17th March 1924.

(Despd.9-05 p.m. Recd.11-00 p.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore,

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

Your secret telegram No.566-S. March 17th.

Punjab can only provide jailers assistant jailers 4 head warders.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

Telegram R., No.449-R., dated and reed. 19th March 1924.

(Despd.1-4 p.m. Reed.2 p.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,

Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India

in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

(Repeated Administrator Nabha).

Continuation of my telegram of the 17th March.

It has now been arranged by Punjab Government to send immediately 26 warders to Nabha in addition to staff already mentioned.

(P.S.V., C.S.B. & Home Dept.)

302 15 mar

628.

Telegram P.J, dated and recd. the 23rd March 1924.
(11-35 p.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,
Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India
in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

I recommend that arrangements be made immediately for the creation of a Council at Nabha under the presidency of Sardar Gurdayal Singh, in accordance with the Dastur-ul-Amal, as Mr. Wilson-Johnston will not be fit for duty for at least six weeks and no British officer with local knowledge is available. Pending Wilson-Johnston's return to duty, I would suggest that Major Field should be transferred as a temporary arrangement from Chamba if no more suitable British Officer is available. If my proposals are acceptable, I would suggest that I should come to Delhi with the Chief Minister of Jind and the Prime Minister of Patiala to settle details.

The Raja of Chamba would probably take advantage of Field's transfer to drink heavily but I only make the suggestion in the event of no other course being feasible. Mr. Craik is doubtful whether the Punjab Government will be able to spare any officer to take Wilson-Johnston's place. The matter is urgent in view of the early arrival at Jaito of two more Jathas.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.

303 15

662.

Telegram P., dated and recd. the 25th March 1924.

(Despd.8-15 a.m. Recd.9-05 a.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,

Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India

in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

CLEAR THE LINE.

The formation of a Council at Nabha is strongly favoured by the Governor of the Punjab, and His Excellency suggests the appointment as a temporary measure of Col.Gregson as Political Agent. The Punjab Government are prepared to lend his services. Colonel Gregson has helped Mr. Wilson Johnston with the arrangements for meeting and the disposal of the last two Jathas and he is in a position to advise the Council and assist in dealing with the next two Jathas. Telegraphic orders are requested as to when a decision may be expected.

This is in continuation of my telegram of March 23rd.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. and Home Dept.)

304

637.

Telegram - P. No. 637-S, dated 25th March 1924. (Desp. 7-30 p.m.)

From - The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Dept., Delhi.

To 99- The Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States, Lahore.

Government of India would be glad to know what salary Gregson should receive first as Officiating Administrater and later as Officiating President of Council. Of course, he will only officiate for the present but may be told that the question of pay is under consideration.

(P.S.V., C.S.B., and Home.)

1st/22pr. 305 646.

Telegram P., No.508-R., dated and recd. the 26th March 1924.

(Despd.1.50 p.m. Recd.4.15 p.m.)

From- The Agent to the Governor-General, Punjab States,

Lahore.

To - The Political Secretary to the Government of India

in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

It is intimated by the Punjab Government that they are unable to provide any further Warder establishment for the 3rd and 4th Jattas.

This is with reference to my confidential demi-official letter 477-R. March 22nd.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)

306

645.

Telegram P., No.645-S., dated the 26th March 1924.

From- The Political Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, Delhi.

To - The Chief Secretary to the Government of the United Provinces.

Nearly 1000 Akalis are confined in Nabha State for indefinite period. These belong to the 1st and 2nd Jathas which arrived Jaito on 21st February and 14th March respectively. In April 3rd and 4th Jathas are expected consisting each of anything between 500 and 1000 Akalis. It will be necessary to confine these also in barbed wire enclosures. For each batch is required jail establishment of approximately 1 ~~best~~ Asst jailor, 26 warders and 4 head warders. Establishment for first two Jathas has been supplied by Punjab Government who cannot however supply any more. If United Provinces Government would kindly help them in this matter, which is one of very great importance Government of India would be grateful. Please telegraph what help can be afforded.

(P.S.V., G.S.B. & Home Dept.)